

15 dead in Cyprus heatwave

NICOSIA (AFP) — At least 15 people have died in the past two days and hundreds more have been admitted to hospital because of the brutal heatwave scorching Cyprus, the authorities said on Saturday. Fourteen people over the age of 70 and a 47-year-old woman have been killed by the heat in the past two days as temperatures continue to soar around 42 degrees Celsius, Health Minister Christos Solomitis said. Health-care facilities across Cyprus have been overwhelmed by hundreds of people coming to emergency rooms suffering from heat-strokes, dehydration, headaches and dizziness, the official Cyprus News Agency said. Temperatures have been five to six degrees Celsius above normal during the heatwave, which is expected to last until Wednesday.

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Khartoum suffers daily power cuts

KHARTOUM (AP) — Sudan's electricity authority apologised Saturday for shortages that are depriving businesses and residents of power for more than 14 hours a day in this capital city. "The present deficiency is out of our control," the National Electricity Corp. said. The corporation did not say what proportion of the city is affected by the outages, but talk is that well over half the population has been affected. Khartoum and its twin Omdurman are cities where public services function poorly at the best of times. They have a combined population of about 5 million people.

Kenyan rescue teams continue search for U.S. embassy explosion casualties

NAIROBI (AFP) — Kenyan rescue workers continued to sift through rubble Saturday to retrieve bodies and search for survivors of the bomb blast outside Nairobi's U.S. embassy which left more than 80 people dead. At least two people were still alive in the wreckage of a building, beside the U.S. embassy, an army officer told AFP at the scene. "One person is alive on the ground-floor," he said. "We can hear him talking to another person trapped behind him." Hospitals in the city were fully stretched coping with the more than 1,000 injured as assistance was on its way from Israel which was sending a specialist team and equipment to help search for victims of Friday's blast. Kenyan President Daniel Arap Moi told diplomats Saturday that 83 people had been killed when a powerful blast ripped through the U.S. embassy badly damaging the building and another nearby. Within minutes of that blast, an explosion rocked the U.S. embassy in Dar Es Salaam, causing less damage but killing seven and injuring 72. Mr. Moi said that 497 people had been admitted to hospitals in the Kenyan capital and another 1,643 treated and discharged. The Kenyan president also appealed for help in investigating the explosion, and for cash. He said the government had set up an emergency fund of 50 million shillings, which is close to a million dollars. U.S. authorities who dispatched a 40-member U.S. Marine anti-terrorism team and a team of about 40 FBI agents to the area said they did not know who was behind the double attack. A second similar team was being formed to go to Dar Es Salaam, a spokeswoman in Washington said. However, U.S. President Bill Clinton vowed to find those responsible for the blasts in which eight Americans were killed in Kenya. "We will use all the means at our disposal to bring those responsible to justice, no mat-

ter what or how long it takes," Mr. Clinton said. An unknown Islamist has claimed responsibility for Friday's deadly bomb blasts in Kenya and Tanzania, in anonymous calls to the media. Almost 80 people were killed and 1,000 others injured in the simultaneous explosions near the U.S. embassies in Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam. In the United Arab Emirates, an unknown Islamist claimed responsibility for Friday's deadly bomb blasts in telephone calls to AFP in Dubai. Other media in Saudi Arabia also received calls from the "Islamic Army." "The two operations against the United States were carried out by the Islamic Army for the Liberation of Muslim Holy Sites," an unidentified man speaking with an Egyptian accent said before hanging up. In Nairobi, a newspaper quoted a witness to the blast as saying that he saw three men of Arab appearance drive up to the embassy in a car just before the blast.

As it reversed into a space close to the building two men jumped out and started firing at the embassy before all three were killed in the blast. Ochieng Okwach, a worker at the ministry of natural resources told the Daily Nation newspaper. "I saw a covered pick up, yellow in colour, approach Gate Way House from Cooperative House direction. It drove right into parking space between the U.S. embassy and Gate Way House, then started reversing, with its boot open towards the embassy," Mr. Okwach said. "The two armed Arabs jumped out even before the vehicle completed reversing. One man ran back into the vehicle as the other sprayed bullets into the embassy building," said Mr. Okwach, whose clothes were stained in blood. Mr. Okwach said the driver, who was also of Arab origin, did not get out of the vehicle, when the explosion went off as the other gunman was still firing his weapons at the embassy. Meanwhile Saturday,

a 140-member rescue team left Israel for Kenya to aid in the search for survivors, an army spokesman said. The medical, rescue and civil defence personnel are taking search dogs and special devices to help find people buried under debris, the army said. Also Saturday a South African Air Force Boeing 707 landed at the Waterkloof Base near Pretoria Saturday with three American casualties from Friday's bomb blast at the U.S. embassy, a spokeswoman said. A senior American diplomat was believed to be among the casualties. South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) national radio news reported. The plane left for Kenya Friday to assist in the evacuation of casualties for treatment in South Africa, after a request by the U.S. embassy in Pretoria. The casualties were to be treated at a military hospital in Pretoria.

King, Queen guests of Clintons over dinner



AMMAN (J.T.) — Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor were guests of U.S. President Bill Clinton and First Lady Hillary at dinner Friday night, Jordan's News Agency, Petra, said Saturday.

The Clintons invited King Hussein and Queen Noor to a private dinner in Washington while the King rests for a few days before starting the second of six rounds of chemotherapy on Wednesday, said Petra. King Hussein, was admitted to Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota on July 14 after suffering from a fever and cold sweats. King Hussein was diagnosed with cancer of the lymph glands two weeks later. Jordan's Ambassador in Washington Marwan Muasher said "that didn't stop King Hussein from piloting his own plane from the Minnesota Clinic to the U.S. capital on



Friday." King Hussein told His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, in a letter Friday that his doctors gave him leave for a few days "because they had noticed an improvement."

Anani starts mission to develop ties with Iran

AMMAN (Agencies) — Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Jawad Anani Saturday started a three-day official visit to Iran during which he will meet President Mohammad Khatami and hold talks with his Iranian counterpart and other government officials, according to Jordan News Agency, Petra.



Petra news agency said Dr. Anani will discuss with the Iranian leaders means of improving Iranian-Jordanian relations in various fields. The French News Agency quoted Dr. Anani as saying upon his arrival in Tehran that the trip "is aimed at building a suitable foundation for boosting cooperation."



He was greeted at the airport by Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharazi and his deputy on Arab Affairs, Mohammad Sadr. Political issues of mutual interest in the Middle East and Gulf region as well as cooperation on economic and cultural matters, trade and tourism will be on the agenda, Dr. Anani said, quoted by the official Iranian news agency IRNA.

Commenting on the military cooperation between Turkey and Israel which has stirred strong criticism from several Muslim countries, Dr. Anani cautioned against provoking Ankara and called for "constructive dialogue."

"We may disagree with Turkey on this position, but we should not provoke this great Muslim country. We should opt for wise and constructive dialogue," he said. But Dr. Anani slammed Israel's alleged policy of "Judaizing" Jerusalem.

UNSCOM teams continue operations in Iraq

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Experts from the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) charged with disarming Iraq went out to work on Saturday morning, three days after Baghdad said it would suspend all cooperation with weapons inspectors. Four teams left UNSCOM headquarters in Baghdad in five U.N. vehicles escorted by Iraqi officials, an AFP photographer reported. The Iraqi leadership on Wednesday announced that Baghdad would no longer cooperate with inspectors from UNSCOM and the International Atomic Energy Agency on intrusive on-site inspections.

But it said that as a gesture of "goodwill," cooperation would continue with inspectors involved in long-term verification. Iraq's military and industrial installations are regularly monitored for their capabilities to produce banned weapons. There are also regular searches for arms or arms parts that Iraq says it had destroyed. The U.N. Security Council on Thursday denounced Iraq's decision as "totally unacceptable" but held back from threatening military force while UNSCOM chief Richard Butler said he has instructed his teams to work normally despite the Iraqi announcement.

PLC delays vote on new cabinet

RAMALLAH (AFP) — The Palestinian council postponed on Sunday a vote on Palestinian President Yasser Arafat's new cabinet as many council members Saturday voiced anger over too few changes in the reshuffle. Despite opposition even within Mr. Arafat's own Fatah party, the cabinet is expected to be approved by a majority of the 88-member council on Sunday, political sources said. "This cabinet represents the absence of respect for political institutions," Fatah member Mohammad Horani told the council meeting. Former higher education minister and Fatah member Hanan Ashrawi, who has resigned in protest over the new cabinet, said it was not capable of leading the Palestinian people in its efforts to establish a state. The debate almost came to blows when Fatah member Hussain Khader mocked Mr. Arafat's powers by proposing the Palestinian leader be named the "God of the Palestinian people for all time." In defiance of the remark, Mr. Arafat supporter Burhan Jarar rushed to Mr. Khader's seat and tried to strike him before he was pulled away. Mr. Arafat had to delay a meeting of his new cabinet on Friday to meet with Fatah members who had expressed opposition to his re-naming a corruption-tainted cabinet which remained largely unchanged except for its enlargement. After the meeting with Mr. Arafat Friday, Fatah leaders decided to allow the party's members in the council to vote as they chose and not as a block. Mr. Arafat is not expected to have difficulty in getting the cabinet approved in the legislative body since 24 ministers who are members of the council would provide most of the 44 votes necessary to get the confidence measure passed, political sources said. Ms. Ashrawi and one other minister resigned in protest after the announcement of the new cabinet on Wednesday. Mr. Arafat added another member to the cabinet Saturday by naming Mithi Abu Ayya as tourism minister. According to his deputies, Mr. Arafat is due to spend Saturday night conferring with members of Fatah, which stands to gain influence through the new cabinet appointments.

Ahmad Tarawneh, statesman, 78

AMMAN (J.T.) — Senator Ahmad Tarawneh died Saturday morning at his home in Amman at the age of 78. A former minister, member of Parliament and chief of the Royal Court, Tarawneh was born in the southern city of Karak in 1920. He finished his primary education in Karak local school and went on to complete his higher education at Salt High School. He later left for Damascus to obtain a BA degree in law, and graduated in 1942. After his return to Jordan he worked as a judge from 1942-1950. In the early fifties Tarawneh began what was to become an illustrious life in public service. He was many times member of Parliament and Lower House speaker three consecutive years. Tarawneh became a member of the regency council in 1950 after the death of King Abdullah until His Majesty King Hussein was proclaimed King in 1952. Between 1950 and 1972 Tarawneh served as minister of justice, agriculture, communications, trade, public works, finance, defence, interior and as deputy prime minister. He was twice appointed chief of the Royal Court, from 1960-1962 and from



1970-1972 and became Upper House speaker in 1983. He was recipient of several royal awards including the Independence Medal of the First Order, Al Kawkab of the First Order, Al Nahda Medal of the First Order, and the Education Medal along with several awards from Arab and foreign countries. His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Saturday afternoon visited the Tarawneh home and offered his condolences to the family. A statement issued by the Royal Court Saturday mourned the passing of Tarawneh, saying he dedicated his life to serving the nation and the King. "The Royal Court offers its deepest sympathies for the loss of Tarawneh who was loyal and who helped estab-

lish our modern Jordan," the statement said. Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and Speaker of the Senate Zeid Rifai mourned Tarawneh and said his death was a "great loss to the nation." Mr. Rifai said Tarawneh was a distinguished politician who dedicated his life to the Kingdom and to serving it since its early beginnings. According to the Royal Court statement, Tarawneh will be laid to rest in the Royal Cemetery today (Sunday) after noon prayers at the Royal Guards Mosque. Tarawneh is survived by his wife and three adult children, Hisham, a businessman, Fayez, married to Al Ra'i Chairman Abdul Salam Tarawneh, and Fayez who is the present chief of the Royal Court.

Why bureaucracy is resisting reform

By Francesca Ciriaci
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The cases of negligence exposed on Friday by His Majesty King Hussein reveal an urgent need to devise a mechanism to enhance transparency and establish effective procedures to hold officials accountable for their deeds. Although political liberalisation launched by King Hussein in 1989 has created a climate of openness and raised the people's expectations for social justice, sociologists and ordinary citizens agree that civil servants often claim and enjoy powers exceeding their mandates. "Bureaucracy has not been known for reflecting the changes in our society, including the increased level of political participation and the affirmation of the ideas of accountability and transparency," said sociologist Musa Shaiwi. "The prevailing mentality is still that some kind of immunity is due to those coming from certain circles or families." In an open letter to HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, the King expressed dissatisfaction with the way the government is dealing with "recurrent incidents of negligence." Although the King said he was hopeful that a committee of inquiry established last

week to investigate the on-going water crisis would reveal "who was responsible for leaving (dirty) filters in the water system and for not ensuring appropriate purification for brackish waters," politicians and activists cast doubt at the committee of inquiry, describing it as not being fully "independent," since it includes senior officials from the ministries of justice and municipal and rural affairs, as well as the Prime Ministry and other government institutions. Among other "recurrent incidents of negligence," the King cited "the near miss between two jumbo jets over Amman a few months ago, [which] would have resulted into a catastrophe that was avoided by God's grace." The incident was caused by three air traffic controllers who all left their work at once to pray, leaving their position unmanned. "The measures taken against them were insignificant for fear that the employees might file lawsuits against the government and win, an excuse that is worse than the sin itself," said the King, a certified pilot himself. The King also mentioned "an accident at

the Aqaba Power Station caused by lack of maintenance and negligence." He called for "taking the appropriate action to deal with the situation once and for all, and taking measures that make an impression upon people in every position." The King's list of cases of negligence has highlighted not only the "negative attitude" of civil servants towards their duty, but also the misconceptions and educational loopholes from which such attitudes stem. Sociologists and experts say repeated negligence is encouraged by the common perception of work as a mere means of livelihood, rather than a fulfilling profession. Such negative attitudes towards one's job derive from both the low level of salaries and the lack of a "reward and punishment" mechanism, to which the King also referred in his letter. Sociologist Sari Nasir said "people in the Arab World have become used to the fact that they are neither rewarded when they do something outstanding, nor punished when they make mistakes." "They are not brought up to feel that they have a role to play and that that role can

make a difference." Notwithstanding the King's strong appeal for transparency, government officials yesterday were still unwilling to reveal the circumstances of the events he cited. Those who accepted to speak under condition of anonymity, said the publication of further details on the incidents would be "detrimental to Jordan." Many officials in different government departments and ministries were also quick to point out that such accidents occur everywhere in the world and are almost impossible to avoid. Sources in the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) clarified that the jumbo jets' near collision occurred in late January and was discovered by CAA officials two weeks later, during a routine inspection of the records. "We discovered it ourselves and we were transparent in admitting the mistake as soon as we found out," one CAA official told the Jordan Times on Saturday. The incident, which never appeared in the press, was reported directly to the King in late February, by which time corrective and disciplinary measures against the responsi-

ble air traffic controllers had already been taken. The CAA drafted an 11-point recommendation to limit similar human errors in the future, "and 90 per cent of these recommendations have already been implemented," the official said. "His Majesty's message was loud and clear," the CAA official added. "But who could ever make sure beyond any reasonable doubt that human errors will never recur?" CAA officials cited in their defence "tight financial constraints that compel us to operate with minimum man-power requirements." As for the near blast at the Aqaba thermal plant, one source at the Jordan Electricity Company (JEC) conceded that "a few months ago" the steam pressure in one of the boilers rose above acceptable levels. However, the source said, one officer on the rounds at the station checked the temperature switch, and took immediate action to reduce the pressure. The source said the incident resulted in only "minor damages." He declined to confirm a report in Al

Dustour daily, yesterday saying the negligence could have led to the explosion of the boiler in question and two other boilers nearby, causing a JD346 million loss. Sociologists were not surprised at most officials' unwillingness to unveil the details of delicate issues, even after the King himself brought them up. "In a society where there is no democratic tradition, officials are afraid to make decisions and take initiative," Dr. Nasir said. He added that the "negative attitude" of Jordan's bureaucracy at all levels is deep-rooted. "This is a society of persons, and not a society of ideals. Therefore, people have loyalty towards persons in influential positions, rather than towards ideals such as democracy or justice," he said. Agreeing that "fear" is the key-word in most officers' relations with their superiors, Dr. Nasir and Shaiwi, who both teach sociology at the University of Jordan, also pointed out that any bureaucracy naturally resists change for fear of losing its privileges. Hence, the paradoxical fact that "during the past two-three years the bureaucratic rank-and-file has showed interests opposed to the leadership's," Dr. Shaiwi said.

Arafat urges Albright to publicise withdrawal plan

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Palestinian President Yasser Arafat has written again to U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright urging her to make public a U.S. plan for Israel to withdraw from another 13 per cent of the West Bank, official Palestinian sources said Saturday.

In the second letter to Ms. Albright in 72 hours, Mr. Arafat said Israeli ideas presented in recent bilateral talks were not new and had not broken through the logjam in the peace process, the source said.

"The only way to bring the peace process back on track is for the U.S. administration to present its initiative, which the Palestinians have officially accepted," the source said, quoting a letter sent Friday.

The State Department said Thursday that it was close to making a pronouncement on the process.

"We're not abandoning this current phase of our effort but we're not far from declaring

our judgement on it," said State Department deputy spokesman James Foley.

The U.S. initiative, presented months ago, outlines a resumption of the stalled peace process by calling on Israel to withdraw troops from an additional 13 per cent of the West Bank.

The Palestinians have repeatedly called for Washington to officially make the plan public to pressure the Israelis to move.

Although the plan calls on the Palestinians to fulfil Israeli security demands, Israel has repeatedly rejected the initiative saying it does not require enough of the Palestinians and that the magnitude of the withdrawal would threaten its security.

"Not presenting the initiative enables [Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin] Netanyahu to use the talks as a cover for his intention to evade the peace process and to give him more time and more excuses not to implement the [previous] agree-

ments," Mr. Arafat wrote, the sources told AFP.

Ms. Albright and Mr. Arafat had spoken about the Israeli ideas Wednesday after Mr. Arafat sent her a letter earlier in that day, Palestinian sources told AFP.

She assured Mr. Arafat that Israel had "new, serious" ideas that could bring about a breakthrough, the sources said. "The Israeli ideas were not more than ideas that radically contradict the U.S. plan and agreements signed," Mr. Arafat said in the letter sent Friday.

Israel Radio reported Saturday that Israeli negotiators had not succeeded in efforts over the weekend to persuade their Palestinian counterparts to resume direct talks.

The bilateral talks that began last month broke off Monday when the Palestinians said they did not accept Israeli proposals that reportedly called for a nature preserve in three per cent of the land from which the Jewish state would withdraw.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Musa in Saudi Arabia to inquire about King Fahd's health

JEDDAH (AFP) — Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa made an unannounced visit to Saudi Arabia Saturday to ask about the health of Saudi King Fahd, the official Saudi news agency SPA reported. Mr. Musa was met in this western city on the Red Sea by Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah Ben Abdul Aziz, to whom he delivered a letter from Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak inquiring into the monarch's health. King Fahd, who is in his late-70s, was hospitalised in August 2 for an inflamed colon. According to an official statement, he underwent a successful operation. Sources at the hospital in Riyadh have said the king will remain there until Monday in order to rest.

Ambulances stationed around Cairo to treat heatstroke victims

CAIRO (AP) — With temperatures hovering around 38 Celsius, officials have ordered ambulances stationed at key points around Cairo to aid heatstroke victims. Al Akhbar Al Youm said Saturday. About 100 ambulances will be kept at main intersections, gardens and tourist sites, the paper reported, quoting health officials. Cairo has suffered temperatures at or near 38 Celsius for more than three weeks, and scores of people have been hospitalised for heat-related illnesses. Such temperatures are not unusual in summer, but not for such an extended period.

Iran's first women's daily newspaper hits newsstands

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran's first daily newspaper dealing with women's issues, which is run by the daughter of former President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, hit newsstands in Tehran on Saturday. Zan, or Woman, said in its first issue it is not a "feminist paper," but that it seeks to "establish a balance in status between men and women." "Zan wants to cast a feminine look at women's problems and try to familiarise itself with the social rights and fill a vacuum," Mr. Rafsanjani's daughter Faezeh Hashemi said in an editorial. The paper said it wants to be "a new voice not just for women, but also for men." Zan ran an article on the "uncertain future" of women's football and another in support of Tehran's embattled mayor. Gholam Hussein Karbaschi, a close political ally of Mr. Rafsanjani.

Reconstruction starts on Egypt's 'oldest mosque in Africa'

CAIRO (AFP) — Restoration work began Saturday on the oldest mosque in Africa, the mosque of the Arab conqueror of Egypt, Amr Ben Al As, Egyptian Culture Minister Farouk Hosni told the press. "This restoration aims at putting the mosque back into its original state as it is described in historic documents," he told reporters. The mosque, which dates to 642, has been extensively changed over the years until it contains almost none of its original elements, according to experts. Mr. Hosni said that "the new restoration project will correct serious architectural errors from earlier restoration of the mosque carried out during the time of the Mameluke Emir Mura in 1797." He said the restoration would also deal with problems of water leakage into the mosque. The mosque, considered one of the most ancient Islamic places of worship, has suffered from its share of accidents over the years. In 1996, collapsing scaffolding carried away some 150-square metres of the roof.

Egypt, U.S. start joint air exercises

CAIRO (AFP) — Joint Egyptian-U.S. air force exercises start on Saturday in Egypt as part of an annual training programme conducted by the two countries, official Egyptian media reported. Egyptian helicopters and bombers will take part in the exercises along with the U.S. aircraft carrier Eisenhower, the media said without giving further details. Cairo and Washington have conducted joint exercises named "Bright Star" every two years in autumn since 1981. Several other Arab countries have also participated in the exercises since 1995.



Iraqi Vice-chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council Izzat Ibrahim (C) lays a wreath at the tomb of the unknown soldier in Baghdad Saturday, on the 10th anniversary of the Iraqi victory in the eight-year-long war with neighbouring Iran. Iraqi President Saddam Hussein predicted that his country would emerge victorious over the U.S., in the latest stand-off over weapons inspections, just as it did over Iran (AFP photo)

Iranian opposition: 3 killed in Baghdad bomb blast

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Three Iraqis, including a four-year-old girl, have been killed in a bomb blast that rocked a residential district of Baghdad, Iranian opposition members said on Saturday.

Another 13 people were injured, including two Iraqis, according to Iran's biggest armed opposition faction, the exiled People's Mujahadeen, which blamed the Friday night attack on the Islamic regime in Tehran.

"The clerical regime's Islamists detonated a remote-controlled bomb... one kilometre from Mujahadeen's office as a Mujahadeen vehicle was about to turn at an intersection," the movement said in a statement issued in Baghdad.

"The bomb, planted in a parcel under a tree on the pavement, caused heavy damage to inhabitants, buildings and shops," it said, adding that the blast left a crater around 1.2 metres wide and one metre deep.

The Mujahadeen said those killed in the explo-

sion shortly after 9:30 p.m. were a four-year-old girl, a 65-year-old street vendor and his son aged 15.

It said 11 other Iraqis were "seriously wounded" adding that two Mujahadeen members were wounded and taken to hospital after their car caught fire.

An Iraqi civil defence official confirmed that an explosion rocked an unnamed residential area of Baghdad Friday evening but did not say if there were any casualties.

"Specialist services are seeking to arrest the perpetrators of this cowardly act," the official told the state news agency INA.

The Mujahadeen, whose leaders fled Iran in the 1980s after bloody clashes with the regime's forces, said it was the 65th "terrorist operation" against the movement in Iraq by Tehran since 1993.

Massoud Rajavi, president of the Mujahadeen's National Council of Resistance of Iran, described the bomb as an "indiscriminate and inhu-

man attack" and called on Iraq to bring those responsible to justice.

Iran, which regularly accuses the Mujahadeen of launching militant operations on its soil, has conducted several military operations against its bases in neighbouring Iraq.

The People's Mujahadeen maintains a number of large bases across the border in Iraq and also conducts intensive publicity campaigns in Western Europe and the United States.

It sparked international condemnation in June when it claimed responsibility for a series of bomb attacks in Tehran, including one on a courthouse in which at least two people died.

The U.S. State Department, in its annual report released earlier this year, said Iran was "the most active state sponsors of terrorism" in 1997 despite the election of moderate President Mohammad Khatami.

Two days of attacks leave 13 dead in Algeria

ALGIERS (AFP) — Attacks by suspected Islamists in Algeria have left 13 people dead and 38 wounded over the past two days, press reports and security forces said Saturday.

Among the dead were eight members of the same family massacred and mutilated overnight Wednesday in the region of Bouira, around 100 kilometres east of Algiers, security forces said Saturday.

Two members of a self-defence group were killed and two others wounded in a clash with an armed gang in the same region Friday, while another group cut the throats of two security guards at a building site on the coast to the west of the capital, reported the Al Watan newspaper.

One bus passenger was

killed and 27 others hurt by a bomb which exploded Thursday in the Medea region, just south of Algiers. Another bomb blast early the next day wounded four people in a southern suburb of the capital, said several newspapers.

The attacks over the past two days are part of a recent upsurge in the bloodshed in Algeria, much of which coincided with a visit by a United Nations fact-finding mission. The mission is due to submit a report Saturday to U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan, which is intended to allow the international community to gauge the extent of the bloodshed in the north African country.

Algeria has been wracked by suspected violence since 1992 when the army-backed

government annulled elections that an Islamic party had been poised to win.

The number of people who have since died varies from 25,000, according to the government, to the U.S. State Department's estimate of 70,000.

The U.N. Human Rights Committee last week issued a damning verdict on Algeria's human rights record, highlighting persistent allegations of systematic torture, secret detentions, disappearances, ongoing massacres of civilians and the increasing use of the death penalty. Algiers, which rejects calls for an international inquiry into the violence as outside interference, indignantly attacked the report as "outrageous."

Arab League chief calls for direct Iraq-U.N. talks

CAIRO (AFP) — Arab League Secretary General Esmat Abdul Meguid called on Saturday for direct talks between Iraq and the U.N. Security Council to solve the crisis over Iraqi disarmament.

It is "necessary to solve the crisis through direct talks between Iraqi officials on the one hand and the members of the U.N. Security Council and the U.N. secretary general on the other, with the aim of ending the suf-

fering of the Iraqi people as well as the sanctions," Mr. Abdul Meguid said in a statement.

The Arab League chief made the statement while receiving Russian charge d'affaires Alexander Tokovnikov who presented a message from Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov on "Russian efforts" to contain the latest U.N.-Iraq crisis.

Mr. Abdul Meguid said he welcomed the Russian position which is positive and favourable

to cooperation between Iraq and the United Nations in view of putting into application U.N. Security Council resolutions," the statement added.

Iraq on Wednesday suspended cooperation with the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) for Iraqi disarmament, saying UNSCOM's makeup must be modified to free it of "U.S. influence." The U.N. Security Council has declared the Iraqi position "unacceptable."

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 4773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

15:10 Cartoon — The Pink Panther
15:20 Cartoon — The Pumpkin Patch
15:30 The Adventures of the Black Stallion
16:00 The American Chart Show
17:00 ...Doc... The Nature World
18:00 Drama — Bonne Esperance
19:00 ...Le Journal
19:15 French Programme — Science Magazine (E-M6)
19:30 ...News Headlines
19:35 Life's Most Embarrassing Moments
20:00 ...People Count
20:30 Talk Show — Challenges
21:00 Drama — Renegade
22:00 ...News in English
22:30 Mini-series — Sleepers
00:30 The History of Rock and Roll

PRAYER TIMES

04:25 ...Fajr
05:51 ...Sunrise Doha
12:41 ...Dhuhr
16:21 ...Asr
19:32 ...Maghreb
20:58 ...Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweifeh, Tel. 5920740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 4632785
St. Joseph Church, Tel. 4624590
Terra Sancta Church, Tel.

4622366

Anglican Church Tel. 4624834/4624811.

St. Afrem Syrian Orthodox Church, Tel. 771751

Amman International Church, Tel. 865897

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation, Tel. 5688404

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman, Tel. 811295

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Tel. 4654952

St. John the Baptist at De la Salle College, Tel. 5661757

Church of the Annunciation, Tel. 4637440

Greek Orthodox Church, Tel. 4646138

Church of Presentation, Sweetfish Tel. 5920146

The United Catholic Church, Tel. 4624757

The English-Language Catholic Parish, Tel. 4614190

Evangelical Free Church, Tel. 892679

The Baptist Church, Tel. 4628052

The Armenian Catholic Church, Tel. 771331

The Armenian Orthodox Church, Tel. 775261

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

Hot weather conditions will persist with temperatures higher than

average by 6-8 degrees centigrade, and winds northwesterly to northeasterly moderate. In Aqaba, it will be hot, winds northerly moderate, and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp.

Amman... 26/40

Aqaba... 31/43

Deserts... 23/42

Jordan Valley... 30/43

Yesterday's high temperatures:

Amman 39, Aqaba 42 Humidity

readings: Amman 28 per cent.

Aqaba 38 per cent.

Following are the highest temperatures expected today in the following areas:

Ajloun... 31

Jerash... 37

Um Qays... 36

Madaba... 35

Petra... 37

Dead Sea... 44

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Munther Qraini... 4779959

Dr. Mukhlis Mazahrah 5820425

Dr. Abdul Hadi Tayyib 5620115

Dr. Wisam Hayyir 4748563

Firas pharmacy 5661912

Al Asma pharmacy 4637055

Namulh pharmacy 4623672

Al Salam pharmacy 4636730

Yacoub pharmacy 4644945

Shamsan pharmacy 4637660

Najib pharmacy 5347632

IRBID:

Dr. Mohammed Shar' 710888

Al Quds pharmacy 4636147

ZARQA:

Dr. Salah Salfarini 987565

Khalifeh pharmacy 485417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 4637111

Civil Defence Department 561111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 4630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Rescue Police 192 462111 4637777

Fire Brigade 4617101

Blood Bank 4775121

Highway Police 5343402

Traffic Police 4896390

Public Security Dept. 4630321

Hotel Complaints 5605800

Price Complaints 5611176

Water & Sewerage Complaints 487367

Amman Municipality Complaints 4787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 010230

Central Amman Telephone Repair 4623101

Abdali Tel. Repair 5661101

Jordan Television 4773111

Radio Jordan 4774111

Water Authority 5680100

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Namulh pharmacy 4623672

Al Salam pharmacy 4636730

Yacoub pharmacy 4644945

Shamsan pharmacy 4637660

Najib pharmacy 5347632

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Abdali Tel. Repair 5661101

Jordan Television 4773111

Radio Jordan 4774111

Water Authority 5680100

J. Electricity Authority 5815615

Electric Power Co. 4636381

RJ Flight Information 44-53200

Queen Alia Int'l Airport 44-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 5921199

The Islamic, Abdali 5666117

Hussein Medical Centre Tel. 5884856

Luzma 4630195

Khalidi Maternity 4642816

Akileh Maternity 4642442

Jabal Amman Maternity 4642362

Malhas, J. Amman 4636140

Palestine, Shamsan 4607071

Shamsan Hospital 5669131

University Hospital 5353444

Al-Muasher Hospital 5667227

Al-Ahli, Abdali 56641646

Italian, Al-Muhajreen 4777101/3

Al-Bashir 4775111/26</

Princess Basma visits Irbid, inspects QAF premises

IRBID (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Saturday toured the Irbid governorate, visiting the town of Sheikh Hussein in the northern Jordan Valley, the city of Irbid and the Irbid refugee camp.

The Princess inaugurated a social services centre in Sheikh Hussein operated by Queen Alia Fund for Social Development (QAF) and inspected the premises, the programmes of the centre and its activities.

Later, Princess Basma addressed a rally at the town, voicing her appreciation of the local people's well-wishes for the speedy recovery of His Majesty King Hussein.

Princess Basma referred to the King's letter Friday to His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan in which he expressed his concern for the well-being of Jordanians.

Princess Basma also

expressed her appreciation of the local community's efforts in carrying out projects in farming, vegetable growing and cotton spinning and weaving processes.

In Irbid, Princess Basma laid the foundation stone of Al Farouk Charitable Society which is dedicated to helping orphans by providing free medication and covering tuition fees for the children's education. The society also offers vocational training.

She also visited the refugee camp and inspected medical services, mother and child services and physiotherapy treatment in the local community.

During her tour, participants in the Ramadan Charity Campaign distributed financial and in-kind assistance to 300 needy families.

Cabinet convenes in Jerash governorate

JERASH (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali on Saturday chaired a Cabinet session at the Jerash governorate's headquarters in the presence of Jerash representatives.

The prime minister informed citizens that treatment of His Majesty King Hussein is progressing and that "the king is following up events in our homeland."

Dr. Majali told representatives to practically apply the slogan of "Freedom and Participation," adopted and promoted by the government so that citizens can exercise decision-making rights.

The prime minister said the meeting coincides with the government's budget preparations and called on citizens to set their governorate's priorities through their municipal councils.

Dr. Majali said the councils have the right to criticise the government, inquire about any issue or propose anything in the public interest to the government.

Dr. Majali said that there are 450,000 government employees, constituting 10 per cent of the county's population, and that "we should not consider university degrees as a means to secure job opportunities in the public sector."

The Cabinet listened to the Jerash representatives' requests and demands and reviewed the ministries' plans

and programmes to be implemented in Jerash governorate.

Minister of Industry, Trade and Supply Hani Mulki welcomed the moves to launch food industries in the governorate, saying that the Ministry of Supply has finished equipping a huge refrigerator with a capacity of 60 tonnes of food stuff.

On the other hand, Minister of Agriculture Mijhem Khreisha said that the ministry will study giving loans to farmers and that his ministry is coordinating efforts with the Ministry of Supply on the import of olive oil to protect "our domestic product and balance between supply and demand."

Mr. Khreisha urged citizens to work in the agriculture sector since only six per cent of these employed in this field in the Jordan Valley are Jordanians.

Minister of Education and Higher Education Mohammad Hamdan said that acceptance at state universities will be increased this year.

Deputy Mifleh Ruheimi called on the government to establish a vocational training centre, a military hospital and a branch of the Cities and Villages Development Bank in addition to writing off small farmers' debts to the government.

Deputy Riyadh Daoud asked the government to link Jerash, and Ajloun with the Balqa governorate by constructing a road next to King Talal Dam.

Women meet House speaker, present memorandum on water

AMMAN (J.T.) — An eight-member delegation representing women organisations in Jordan Saturday presented Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Sa'd Hayel Srour with a memorandum concerning the current water pollution issue.

One of the group members, President of the Arab Women Organisation

Emily Nafa'a, told the Jordan Times that the memorandum demanded that the Lower House hold the ministers of health and water responsible for the contamination of water pumped to western neighbourhoods and that the House should demand that the government assume responsibility to prevent certain parties from monopolising the sale of water. Additionally, the memorandum said the government should arrange for the different districts of Amman to receive water supply.

According to Ms. Nafa'a, the women organisations urged Parliament to ensure that the government ensures health security for Jordanian citizens and that force it stop issuing conflicting statements about the water situation.

Last Wednesday, both the Consumer Protection Society and several women organisations asked the Jordan Bar Association to

examine the possibility of suing the government over the water problem.

According to Ms. Nafa'a, the women group discussed with Mr. Srour a range of topics that included women rights and the press and publications draft law which is being debated in Parliament.

Mr. Srour was quoted by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, as saying that Parliament has opened the door to all parties concerned with the press and publications draft law, like journalists and former ministers of information, to express their views to the concerned Parliamentary committee.

The House is always ready to listen to the views of the public on issues of public interest, with special attention given to the press freedoms, the water question and issues of concern to women, said Mr. Srour.

He said that His Majesty King Hussein's concern over the water issue has given Parliament further impetus to play its role and to help reveal points of flaw and weakness.

The women group included Siham Qasem, Laila Abul Huda, Nuha Ma'aitah, Nabillah Qariouti, Sanaa Qammoh, Zeina Sharaiha and Ifrah Moola.

House committees to present reports tomorrow

Ministry official confirms receiving final Stanley report

By Ahmad Khathib
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Lower House's committees of agriculture and health Saturday discussed their reports on the water crisis in order to submit the final findings on the situation to the government tomorrow, deputy

Salamah Hiari, head of the agriculture committee, said yesterday.

He stressed that the formation of a governmental investigation committee "will not stop the Parliamentary commissions from inquiring into the water pollution."

The government last week formed its own committee to investigate the potable water crisis which started in the first week of July when western Amman residents complained that the water reaching their homes was discoloured and foul-smelling.

"The government basically is investigating itself," Mr. Hiari told the Jordan Times. "The Higher Judicial Council is the neutral, authorised party that should investigate the problem."

Recent reports on the water published in the local press identified a high concentration of algae and faecal coliforms (body waste) in the waters of the Yarmouk River, Lake Tiberias and Mukhaibeh as the cause.

According to a senior official at the Ministry of Water and Irrigation, the

final report of Stanley Consultants, the American firm that was hired by the ministry to identify the cause of polluted water, was submitted recently by the ministry to the governmental investigation committee.

A preliminary report by the American firm was leaked to the press last week.

Meanwhile, Munther Haddadin, Minister of Water and Irrigation, yesterday said the ministry has submitted its laboratory tests on water to the Parliamentary committee.

He added that Zai Treatment Plant (ZTP) last Thursday started operating at full capacity, providing direct water supplies throughout Amman twice every week as per the regular

summer rationing schedule.

Last Saturday, the Jordan Water Authority announced that it would implement a new water pumping schedule for domestic use in Amman, cutting direct supplies to once a week from twice every seven days. It blamed the move on the inability of the ZTP to deal with routine water demand until all its filters were cleaned.

Opposition parties and several organisations are studying the possibility of suing the government over the water problem. Columnists in local dailies have been urging citizens to initiate legal action and to investigate possible official negligence.

Government introduces measures to meet water demand

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Water and Irrigation Saturday announced several measures to help provide water to Amman residents.

In its statement, the ministry said it has made available a sufficient number of water trucks that can cover the needs of people in the Amman area, and has opened offices at the following locations: Abdali, Tarek, Um Sumraaq, Tla'a Al Ali, Sweileh and Ein Ghazal.

Government placed employees from the Water Authority, the Ministry of Supply, the Public Security Department and the Greater Amman Municipality at each location to receive public requests for the purchase of water.

The ministry statement named ten other locations which have artesian wells where the public can buy water, in addition to purchasing water from trucks coming from Zarqa to Amman and stationed at Marka in east Amman.

Higher Court rejects contestation of decision to revoke nationality

By Rana Hussein
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Higher Court of Justice rejected a case filed by a 39-year-old man against the director general of the Passport and Civil Status Department (PCSD) contesting the department's decision to revoke his nationality, national number and family book.

Azmi Saeed Qassem filed the case against the department on March 28, 1998, after an employee at the PCSD seized his passport and revoked his nationality and national number a month earlier when Mr. Qassem went to renew his five-year passport, according to court documents.

The department issued him a temporary passport instead, the court document added.

The court said that Mr. Qassem, a resident of Zowata town of Nablus was first issued a Jordanian passport in 1977, which listed his residency in Zowata in Nablus. The plaintiff renewed his passport in 1985 at the Jordanian Embassy in Bonn, Germany.

But in its ruling last week, the court rejected Mr. Qassem's demand that his passport be renewed on the grounds that "he is not a Jordanian citizen because he is considered a Palestinian national in accordance with Jordan's decision [in 1968] to sever administrative and legal ties with the West Bank."

"The plaintiff holds a green card issued by the Jordanian authority that proves that he was a resident of the West Bank before and after the 1967 war," the court stated.

The court maintained that since Mr. Qassem was born in the West Bank town of Nablus and was living there before Jordan's decision to sever ties, he lost his Jordanian nationality and became a Palestinian national.

The court explained that according to regulations issued after the severance of ties with the West Bank "a person living in the West Bank before July 31, 1988, is to be considered a Palestinian national, and not a Jordanian."

Palestinians holding green cards are allowed to stay one month in Jordan, with the exception of students, patients requiring medical treatment or those working abroad.

The court added that after examining several legal documents, it found the plaintiff held a green card, which he used to travel back and forth between the two banks, and even if he was given permission to reside in Jordan, this does not entitle him to citizenship.

The court was presided over by

Judge Mahmoud Hijazi and was also comprised of Justices Farah Rabadi, Hisham Ellian, Mohammad Allawneh and Mahmoud Odeh.

Two weeks ago the same court rejected a case filed by Jiryes Handal against the director general of PCSD contesting a department decision to deny him a national number on his five-year temporary passport.

The court ruled then that Mr. Handal is a Palestinian citizen and not entitled to a national number.

These two decisions overturn a previous court ruling by former president of the Higher Court of Justice Judge Farouk Kilani, who ruled then in the case of Adel Omar vs the State that nationality was inalienable.

Judge Kilani ruled that based on the Jordanian nationality law that no Jordanian national should be denied his/her citizenship except in accordance with the law. He said that the decision to sever links with the West Bank was an administrative decision that does not override the law.

Judge Kilani was the chief of the Higher Council, but was removed from office in March after serving only 80 days when the minister of justice recommended that the judge be retired early.

News Briefs

16 injured in road accident

AMMAN (Petra) — Sixteen people were admitted to Al Iman Hospital in Ajloun on Saturday after being injured in a collision between two cars on the Ajloun road, police sources said. The sources called on all drivers to stay within legal speed limits, adding that the accident occurred when one of the drivers lost control of his car and collided with the other one.

Khawalda named director of railway

AMMAN (Petra) — A Royal Decree was issued Saturday appointing Abdullah Ibrahim Mahmoud Al Khawalda as Director General of Aqaba Railway Corporation as of August 2, 1998.

Prince Hamzeh attends ceremony

AMMAN (Petra) — Deputising for His Majesty King Hussein, His Royal Highness Prince Hamzeh Ben Al Hussein attended Saturday the crowning ceremony of His Royal Highness Prince Al Muhtadi Billah, son of Sultan Hassan Balqiyah of Brunei, as Regent.

CDD reports 28 deaths

AMMAN (Petra) — The Civil Defence Department (CDD) reported Saturday that 28 people died in different accidents last week. CDD said that 1,069 accidents took place last week.

Hot weather to hang on

AMMAN (J.T.) — The current heat wave that has sent Jordanians scrambling for shade over the past two weeks is expected to continue for at least three more days, the Department of Meteorology announced Saturday.

A department official told the Jordan Times that high temperatures, which peaked at 39.5 C in Amman Saturday afternoon, are expected to hover around 25 degrees at night, accompanied by 40 per cent humidity over the coming three days.

The extraordinary temperatures — six to eight degrees above average for this time of the year — are a result of a very hot air mass originating over the Indian subcontinent, which is affected by the monsoon depression.

The air mass is passing through the Arabian Peninsula, moving westwards, and is affecting Jordan, along with other countries in the eastern Mediterranean.

Winds will be southeasterly dry and hot with temperatures ranging from 37 to 39.5 C.



KHALIL AL RAHMAN SOCIETY: Wahid Ja'bari explains a court decision to tax the charity to needy families (photo courtesy of Khalil Al Rahman Society)

Charity threatens to suspend work over taxation

By Mohammad Ben Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A local charity on Saturday criticised as "unfair and illegal" a decision by the customs court fining it JD60,000 for engaging in commercial activity in violation of its founding charter.

Wahid Ja'bari, chairman of the Khalil Al Rahman Society, said the court imposed the stiff fine because the society rents out its main hall for weddings — a move the government claims is earning the organisation extra revenue that should be taxed.

Mr. Ja'bari threatened to suspend the charity's activities if the government does not reverse the decision and said the society will refer to international organisations to help it cope with the "expected financial catastrophe."

However, Mr. Ja'bari, a former Lower House of Parliament member, insisted the rental fees were generating extra income that the society spends on needy families.

"The revenues generated by the hall are used to assist people as the charity is non-profit," said Mr. Ja'bari Saturday.

The society supports 136 families with monthly salaries and it spends JD3,000 monthly on charitable activities, according to Mr. Ja'bari.

Customs officials declined to elaborate on the court's decision.

Members say the hall is not only used for wedding celebrations, but also for lectures, social activities, funerals, reconciliations of disputes and other activities free of charge.

"The minister of social development supports the society's position and has sent a letter to the Prime Minister urging him to cancel the fine," said Mr. Ja'bari.

Minister of Social Development Mohammed Mamsar could not be reached for comment.

Mr. Ja'bari said schools run by the society were exempted from any kind of tax.

"How does the Customs Department justify their decision, while other government ministries believe we should not be taxed," he asked.

Applied Science students stage hunger strike

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Four students at the Applied Science University (ASU) launched a hunger strike on Saturday to protest the administration's decision to suspend them, said a spokesman for the student council.

Anas Maraqa, deputy head of the student council at ASU, said the students, Rami Jabir, Mohammad Shadid, Ra'ed Bitar and Mohammad Lutfi, launched the open-ended strike to push the administration to reverse its decision, taken earlier this month.

According to Mr. Maraqa, the university administration suspended the students for distributing a statement by the student council criticising the administration's decision to close the council's office. The statement called on students to stage a rally inside the campus to protest university regulations and the closure of the office.

University officials said the students' actions violated university regulations which ban holding any processions or strikes inside the campus.

"The statement distributed by the council was intended to clarify to students why the council's office was closed and the arbitrary actions taken by the administration," Mr. Maraqa said. He said university security stormed

the student council office and confiscated its contents.

"The student council's threats to hold a strike inside the campus and their activities to instigate unrest among students in the university is unjustified and unacceptable," said ASU President Suleiman Arabiyat. He said the decision to suspend the students followed a thorough investigation.

"I believe that there are outsiders who are trying to instruct these students and give them orders to create unrest inside the campus," said Dr. Arabiyat, adding he will not allow the students to carry out the hunger strike.

"These parties are trying to politicise these students' activities for their ends," he added.

Dr. Arabiyat refused to name these parties.

Like most of the public and private universities, the ASU's council is dominated by students affiliated with the Islamic movement in Jordan, mainly the Muslim Brotherhood.

"If they believe that the decision to suspend them was unjustified, they could appeal, which they have already done, so there is no need for what they are doing now," Dr. Arabiyat said.

The ASU, located in Shafa Badran, is a private university owned by local investors and teaches science subjects.

Save water...every drop counts!

WHAT'S GOING ON

LECTURES

• "Petra — Great Temple" by Dr. Martha Joukowsky at the American Center of Oriental Research (ACOR) on Monday Aug. 10 at 7:00 p.m. (Tel. 534-6117).

• "The Educational Development in Jordan Between Theory and Application" by former Minister of Education Dr. Munther Al Masri (in Arabic) at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, Jabal Amman on Monday Aug. 10 at 7:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

• Photo exhibition on old buildings of Salt entitled "Engravings on the Wings of Time" at the Royal Cultural Centre, until Aug. 13.

Taleban forces claim capture of Mazar-i-Sharif

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — Afghanistan's Taleban militia Saturday claimed to have captured Mazar-i-Sharif, the last major prize in its war against a fractious northern alliance.

The report could not be immediately confirmed. A spokesman for the anti-Taleban alliance said there was fierce fighting near the city, but that the Taleban religious militia had been unable to enter.

The fall of Mazar-i-Sharif would be a major blow to an opposition pushed to a dwindling corner of northern Afghanistan, and would give the Taleban control of virtually all of Afghanistan.

Taleban spokesman Abdul Ramana Hutaki said opponents retreated south of Mazar-i-Sharif to Bamyan Province after the Taleban attacked from the west early Saturday morning. Taleban troops also had been poised east of Mazar-i-Sharif.

Mr. Hutaki said the entire city was under Taleban control. He had no details on casualties or the number of prisoners taken.

Abdullah, a spokesman for the anti-Taleban alliance reached in Paris, said he had reports of major fighting around Mazar-i-Sharif, but said his forces repulsed the Taleban attack. Abdullah, like many Afghans, uses one name only.

The Islamic Republic News Agency in Iran, which had reported a Taleban victory even before Taleban officials claimed it, described a dramatic battle for the city.

"Continuous explosions are being heard in the city and there are sporadic acts of resistance in the streets," the Iranian news agency reported from Mazar-i-Sharif. "Various districts are burning and a large number of houses have been destroyed."

In Iran, which has backed the anti-Taleban coalition, Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi called on the Taleban to protect the well-being of staff at the Iranian consulate in Mazar-i-Sharif.

"We have conveyed this wish also to the Pakistani government, which has

close ties with the Taleban," Mr. Kharrazi said. Sources in Mazar-i-Sharif, who refused to be named, said the city was heavily bombed and a heavy exchange of rocket and shell-fire could be heard. Residents took shelter in basements.

The anti-Taleban alliance has been under heavy pressure since the Taleban captured its stronghold of Sheberghan, about 100 kilometres west of Mazar-i-Sharif, nearly a week ago.

The Taleban have imposed a strict version of Islamic law in territory they control. Since capturing Kabul in 1996, Taleban officials have barred girls from school, confined most women to their homes, forbade all music except religious songs and banned anything published outside Afghanistan.

The anti-Taleban coalition is mostly made up of Afghanistan's minority ethnic and religious groups, factions that sometimes fight each other as well as the Taleban army.

Kabila, African leaders discuss Congo crisis

VICTORIA FALLS, Zimbabwe (R) — President Laurent Kabila and six African leaders were huddled in crisis talks Saturday to seek an end to the widening conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The meeting in Zimbabwe's Victoria Falls resort, which began with a working breakfast, was being hosted by President Robert Mugabe and included the presidents of Zambia, Tanzania, Namibia, Uganda and Rwanda.

The last two countries are accused by Mr. Kabila of backing Tutsi-led rebels threatening to topple him just over a year after he came to power in the former Zaire.

Zimbabwe's state news agency said the prospects of a breakthrough were gloomy, reporting that Mr. Kabila was in an uncompromising mood. It also said that two of his top officials, Presidential Affairs Minister Pierre Victor Moyo and Justice Minister Mwenze Kongo, had angrily accused Uganda and Rwanda of masterminding the rebellion and demanding they withdraw their troops.

Quoting Zimbabwean government sources, ZIANA said Mr. Kabila had initially refused to join a private dinner hosted by Mr. Mugabe Friday, saying he did not want to be in the same room as

Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni and Rwandan leader Pasteur Bizimungu.

He was eventually persuaded to attend by Mr. Mugabe and Tanzanian President Benjamin Mkapa, but there was no dialogue between Mr. Kabila and any member of either delegation, the agency added.

Organisers of the summit said there would be no formal speeches during the meeting, which is expected to last at least five hours, but added that a statement would be issued at the end.

"The main objective will be to try and arrange a ceasefire and then consolidate that into a broader political framework that could lead to an acceptable programme for all the parties," a Zimbabwean official said.

Tutsi-led rebels waging a week-long campaign against Mr. Kabila claimed fresh advances in the east of what used to be Zaire. In Kinshasa, state radio said loyalist troops had retaken the airport in the city of Kisangani in the remote northeast.

Rwanda, which backed Mr. Kabila on his way to toppling veteran dictator Mobutu Sese Seko last year, denies involvement in the latest rebellion and insists the crisis is an internal matter provoked by Mr. Kabila's poor leadership.

Friday Rwanda's Bizimungu said his army was not fighting in the territory of its giant neighbour, but warned that this could change.

"I understand that (Mr. Kabila) has declared war on my army and my people. Of course, if we are provoked, we will be involved," Mr. Bizimungu said.

Uganda also dismisses charges of involvement in the revolt. Rebel Commander Sylvain Bikelenge said Friday from the eastern border town of Goma, where the revolt erupted Sunday, that Mr. Kabila should go and that their ultimate target was Kinshasa.

Mr. Bikelenge, head of the 10th army battalion, said his forces had captured the oil town of Muanda in the west and other units were now targeting the southern town of Kalemba, gateway to the former Zaire's copper-rich Shaba Province.

Zambian President Frederick Chiluba, whose country's vital copper mines lie close to the border with the Congo, said: "We are all worried about events in the Congo and it is my hope that we can get a settlement because a stable Congo is important for the region."

Russia's next Mir space crew heads for launch site

MOSCOW (R) — A three-man team of cosmonauts, including a former defence adviser to President Boris Yeltsin, flew to their launch site in Kazakhstan Saturday ready for next week's blast-off to the ageing Russian space station Mir.

A Mission Control spokesman said by telephone the trio set off for Baikonur cosmodrome from Moscow early Saturday morning. A back-up crew of three flew there on a separate plane.

Crew commander Gennady Padalka, flight engineer Sergei Avdeyev and presidential aide Yuri Baturin are scheduled to blast off for the penultimate mission to Mir Thursday.

Padalka and Avdeyev will replace the crew in orbit. Talgat Musabayev and Nikolai Budarin, and are expected to stay aloft for 201 days. Baturin will spend about two weeks on Mir before returning with the replaced crew.

First Deputy Prime Minister Boris Nemtsov visited Mission Control at Korolyov outside Moscow Friday.

During the visit, Mr. Nemtsov spoke to the two-man crew aboard the 12-year-old Mir, scheduled to be phased out next June.

Musabayev, the Mir commander, lobbied Mr. Nemtsov to keep it flying even longer. At one point, he held up a sheet of paper to the video camera which he said was an appeal from American scientists to keep Mir in orbit.

"They are disturbed that preparations are under way to bring down the world's only manned station," he said.

A cargo supply tug collided with Mir last year in a near-fatal accident. Months of repairs have restored most of its functions, although one module is still sealed off.

"The station is now in wonderful condition," flight engineer Budarin told Mr. Nemtsov.

Sergei Gorbanov, a spokesman for the Russian Space Agency, later said some officials wanted to see Mir celebrate its 15th birthday in space and were pressing for a stay of execution.

But he said unless a consortium from different countries emerged to help cover the

\$250 million a year it costs to keep Mir aloft, it would be retired as planned next summer.

Mr. Nemtsov was careful not to make any promises to extend Mir's life. But he said Russia would meet its commitments to the new International Space Station despite financing woes but would have to resort to some creative ways to raise funds.

"It's a very, very expensive programme but nonetheless we consider Russian participation in the programme absolutely necessary," he told a news conference.

The new station, bringing together Russia, the United States, Europe, Canada and Japan, is already more than a year behind schedule because of Russian delays due to cash shortages.

The first of many modules is scheduled for launch in November, with the first crew going up next July.

The fund-raising ideas include auctioning off licences for satellite communications and selling off space agency assets such as little-used buildings and plots of land.



Prince Rainier of Monaco (centre) poses for photographers with Princess Caroline (left) and Princess Stephanie of Monaco (right) during the gala of the Red Cross in Monaco. This annual society ball by the Principality's royal family is held at the Monaco sporting club (Reuters photo)

China to prosecute dissident over opposition party

BEIJING (AFP) — Police in eastern China's Hangzhou city have formally placed dissident Wang Youcai under arrest on charges of "incitement to overthrow state power" for attempting to legally register a pro-democracy opposition party, his wife said Saturday.

The move signals that authorities have singled out the former Tiananmen student activist for criminal prosecution as the ring-leader behind the attempt — the first of its kind recorded since the start of Communist rule in 1949.

Police telephoned Hu Jiangjia to inform her that they issued the arrest papers on Friday for her husband, who has been in police custody since July 10, she told AFP.

Wang Youcai, 32, together with two other activists in Zhejiang province, Wang Donghai and Lin Hui, personally submitted the CDP's application on June 25 — the day U.S. President Bill Clinton arrived in China for a landmark visit.

In a separate development, Mr. Lin was released

from detention late Thursday, his father said.

Police detained some 20 activists associated with the party in the weeks following Mr. Clinton's visit, but at the start of this week, only Mr. Lin and Wang Youcai remained in custody.

At least three members set free last month including Wang Donghai, Zhu Yufu and Zhu Zhengming, were warned not to leave their homes by police and remain under quasi-house arrest.

Wang Youcai spent three years behind bars for his role in the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests. Beijing named him as the 15th most wanted student leader after the military crushed the pro-democracy demonstrations.

The dissident's wife said his family had hired two lawyers to defend him but only one remained in their service following harassment from authorities.

According to a report issued by U.S.-based dissidents, lawyers hired to defend the CDP-related activists received threats and warnings from officials last month, and one, Wang

Peiji, even had his licence revoked.

The United States on July 13 urged China to release all dissidents associated with the party, saying citizens had the right to peacefully express their views.

Three days later, 100 dissidents from 19 Chinese provinces signed an open letter condemning the Zhejiang detentions as "against the Chinese government's promises to improve the human rights situation and promote democracy."

It cited President Jiang Zemin's June announcement that China would this autumn sign the U.N. Convention on Civil and Political Rights, which guarantees the right of peaceful political expression.

But the foreign ministry has dismissed queries on the attempted registration of the party, referring to its members as "criminals."

"The registration of social organisations which undermine China's national security is illegal," foreign ministry spokesman Tang Guoqiang said.

Exiled Myanmar activists rally in Thailand capital against junta

BANGKOK (AFP) — A standoff developed between Thai police and exiled Myanmar anti-junta activists here Saturday as some 200 protesters gathered outside Yangon's embassy to mark the 10th anniversary of a bloody crackdown on dissent in the isolated neighbouring state.

Thai police initially ordered the activists to disperse, but later allowed them to continue their vigil after a compromise was reached and the activists ceased blocking an area in front of the embassy's gate.

The embassy was closed Saturday but some officials could be seen inside. Some 50 police — including 10 in riot gear and 20 in plainclothes — were deployed when senior officers tried to persuade the protesters to disperse. But most later withdrew, leaving only a few officers to monitor the situation.

"There has been an order to standby in case the situation here gets out of hand," one of the officers told AFP.

Another officer, requesting anonymity, said the student protesters were an inconvenience to the general public and that they should reduce their number to "seven or eight."

The overnight vigil swelled to some 250

people earlier Saturday, the 10th anniversary of a military crackdown on a pro-democracy uprising in Myanmar which left thousands dead, according to unofficial estimates.

Crowds of youths gathered outside the embassy, chanting slogans before a wreath was laid at the gate and orange-clad Buddhist monks prayed for the victims.

"We came to demonstrate our feelings," All Burma Students' Democratic Front coordinator Kaung Myat told AFP. "Ten years ago the military killed many students, and nothing has changed since then."

Wearing red headbands adorned with a single golden fighting peacock, the longstanding symbol of student revolution in Myanmar, ranks of activists sat facing away from the embassy onto the busy road.

On the embassy's grey concrete wall and spiked steel gate the students had pasted posters of opposition National League for Democracy (NLD) leader and Nobel peace prize laureate Aung San Suu Kyi.

"Long live Daw (honour) Aung San Suu Kyi" and "We can't forget democracy in Burma now" were scrawled in large letters on posters stuck to the gate.

Pamphlets handed out to passers-by called on Myanmar's junta to convene a parliament based on the results of elections in 1990 and to allow freedom of political activities for ethnic minorities.

The NLD won 1990 polls by a landslide but the junta refused to relinquish power. Since then military authorities have closed universities and clamped down on dissent. Many students and opposition supporters fled to neighbouring Thailand.

The activists called for the people of Myanmar and the international community to remember Aug. 8, 1988, when a pro-democracy uprising was crushed by the army.

International pressure, including from the Thai government, has been mounting on Myanmar's military in recent weeks to begin dialogue with major opposition parties.

The rally started at 8:00 a.m. (1300 GMT) after many stayed outside the embassy overnight. It was expected to end Saturday, but many students said they planned to stay until Aug. 21.

"We want to be free from the military government and for them to recognise the elections eight years ago," said All Burma Basic Education Union member Gyaw Oo.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Former White House intern accused of stalking Stephanopoulos

NEW YORK (AP) — A former White House intern has been charged with harassing former senior U.S. presidential adviser George Stephanopoulos, showing up at his home and his workplace and sending him letters. Tangelia Burkhardt, 30, of New York was arraigned July 3 on harassment charges, according to a criminal complaint made public this week. Between Jan. 22 and July 2, Ms. Burkhardt allegedly followed Mr. Stephanopoulos around the city, showing up at Columbia University, where he is a visiting professor of political science, and at his home, prosecutors said Friday. Ms. Burkhardt also allegedly went to a coffee shop and a deli Stephanopoulos frequented, followed him to other cities and to private meetings and sent him one or two letters a week. Mr. Stephanopoulos was granted an order of protection, requiring Ms. Burkhardt to have no contact with him. Prosecutors did not know when Ms. Burkhardt was a White House intern, and White House officials did not return a telephone message seeking comment. Ms. Burkhardt's attorney, Myron Beldock, said his client was innocent. Mr. Stephanopoulos rose to national prominence during the 1992 presidential campaign, which was won by Bill Clinton. He was White House communications director before moving into an office next to the Oval Office, where he continued as one of the president's most trusted aides.

Serb war crimes suspect fatally shot in drunken brawl

BELGRADE, Yugoslavia (AP) — A war crimes suspect wanted by the U.N. tribunal for atrocities committed during the Bosnian war has died in a bar brawl in Serbia, sources said Saturday. Slobodan Miljkovic, known also by his nom de guerre, Lugar, died in a drunken brawl late Friday in his hometown of Kragujevac, 100 kilometres southeast of Belgrade, a police source confirmed Saturday. Miljkovic had been indicted by the U.N. War Crimes tribunal at The Hague, Netherlands, for allegedly participating in mass killings in the northeastern Bosnian town of Srebrenica in 1992. He was also wanted on three counts of individual murder and numerous beatings, but he remained at large in Serbia. Two other Serb war crimes suspects, both already at The Hague, have died in the past six weeks. One committed suicide, while the other died of a ruptured aorta. Known as a pre-war thug and shady underworld figure, Miljkovic returned to Serbia after the war because authorities in Belgrade would not extradite him to The Hague. According to local radio reports, Miljkovic and a friend started a violent brawl in a bar when the bar owner, an ex-policeman, tried to stop them from molesting a waitress. Miljkovic, his friend and the bar owner were all fatally shot in the fight and several others were wounded, the report said. In March, Miljkovic gave an interview to a Belgrade paper in which he claimed innocence and blamed any atrocities on politicians. "The war is over and we are declared war criminals. What about those who sent me there?" Miljkovic was quoted by Demokracija daily as saying. "They pushed us into war, they explained to us the goals and aims. And now we are war criminals, and they are still in their positions."

Oklahoma teen arrested after multiple slayings

GLENPOOL, Oklahoma (AP) — A 15-year-old boy suspected of killing his parents and his girlfriend's grandfather was arrested in Kansas with two missing teenage girls and two infants. Tulsa police said Daylan Shanks was arrested late Friday in Emporia, Kansas, along with girlfriend Christina Lynn Fuller, 14, and her sister, Keri Dawn Fuller, 13. A 1-year-old boy and a 2-year-old girl, who were with the youths when they were arrested, apparently belong to a sister of one of the teenage girls, said Emporia police Sgt. Mark Summey. The search for Dylan Shanks began shortly after the shootings of Emmett E. Smith and Jackie Anita Smith at their home in Tulsa Friday afternoon. Smith was killed but Mrs. Smith, who was treated for grave wounds to her chin and neck, named Shanks as the shooter, police said. Deputies who went to Shanks' rural trailer home then found his parents, Alva Ray Shanks and Carolyn Denise Shanks, shot to death.

Thai mother with HIV becomes drug dealer after losing job

BANGKOK, Thailand (AP) — Police have arrested an HIV-positive woman who turned to amphetamine-trafficking for money to feed her three children after she was shunned at her former workplace. Police said Saturday that Rachada Chenchom had lost her factory job in Lamphun in northern Thailand after her employers and co-workers discovered she had the AIDS virus. Ms. Rachada, who said she had contracted the disease from a husband who died three years ago, told police she had no choice but to sell amphetamines to support her children. Ms. Rachada was arrested in possession of 279 amphetamine tablets, police said. Amphetamine use is a mushrooming social problem in Thailand. The government recently stiffened the penalties to be as severe as those for heroin trafficking, which can bring the death penalty.

No barking at night, Russian town tells dog owners

MOSCOW (R) — A provincial Russian town has ordered pet-lovers to stop their dogs barking at night and to stay off the alcohol if they want to take them for a walk. Reporting from the town of Naberezhniye Chelny in central Russia, Interfax news agency said dog owners faced a fine of up to 15 roubles (\$2.40) if they did not comply with the measure, which covers the hours from 10 p.m. to 8 a.m. Interfax said there were 4,500 registered dogs in the town, which is in the autonomous Volga republic of Tatarstan. The order, signed by Mayor Rifaat Altynbayev, does not appear to give owners advice on how to stop their dogs barking. Even if successful, the measure is unlikely to give people a better night's sleep because most Russian towns have many abandoned dogs roaming the streets.



With Koreans huddle under umbrellas in Seoul. Heavy rains pounded the city for 24 hours, with 87 people killed.

landslide east five

South Korea (AP) — A landslide in the mountains near Seoul killed at least five people and injured others Saturday, officials said. The landslide occurred in a residential area, and the bodies of three people were found. The cause of the landslide is still under investigation.

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American b ocean route

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP) — An American cargo ship was forced to take a detour around the tip of South America after a fire broke out on board Saturday, officials said.

The ship, the *MS Costa Concordia*, was carrying a large amount of cargo, including cars and electronics. The fire started in the engine room and spread to other parts of the ship.

The ship was forced to stop in a nearby port, and the cargo was being unloaded. The cause of the fire is still under investigation.

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All the Clear

Smoke-Free Flights on Sun



Two South Koreans huddle under umbrellas as they look at a bridge destroyed by floods in Kyonggi province, just north of Seoul. Heavy rains pounded the country's northern areas again Saturday, bringing the death toll from recent rainfalls to 204, with 87 people missing and some 30,000 others made homeless (Reuters photo)

Landslides, floods kill at least five in South Korea

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — After a brief reprieve mud slides and floods in South Korea triggered by fresh rains killed at least five people and forced tens of thousands to flee their homes Saturday, just two days after massive floods near the capital left 140 people dead.

Two U.S. Army soldiers were killed and 12 others were injured when a mud slide engulfed their camp south of Seoul early Saturday, Col. Carl Kropf, a spokesman for the U.S. military command in South Korea said.

Tens of thousands of people returned to their silted, mud-caked homes around Seoul Friday after being driven out by floods the day before. But up to 40 centimetres of rain

fell Saturday, forcing them to flee again.

The combined death toll from the flooding has reached 210, including Saturday's deaths, and 94 are still missing in the worst natural disaster to strike South Korea since a typhoon claimed 350 lives in 1987. Property damage estimates ranged from \$200 million to \$2 billion.

Shin Yong-Bal, 58, and his 20-year-old daughter were killed when a landslide buried their home, said police in Songnam, a city just south of Seoul. Another man was killed after falling into flood water in Seoul, police said.

With more rain pounding the metropolitan area, 30,000 homes remained submerged, the Home Ministry's Disaster Relief Headquarters said.

At least two tributaries of the Han River, which bisects Seoul, overflowed. Officials using loudspeakers were urging residents in low-lying districts to evacuate. Lightning crisscrossed the Seoul sky, disrupting electricity and telephone service and making the

evacuation more difficult.

With heavy rains causing dams upstream to discharge water from swollen reservoirs, the Han River rose dangerously high, city officials said. Riverside roads were closed.

Soldiers and rescue workers picking through flood debris people still missing from Thursday's flooding were ordered to retreat to higher ground.

"We are fighting with guerrilla rain showers. They come and dump and go away. We cannot predict where they will appear again. It's impossible to predict how much more damage we have to sustain," said Won Yoo-Jin, a government relief official.

The deluge was brought by the same storm system that a week earlier sent flash floods raging down mountain valleys in the southern tip of the Korean Peninsula, killing 67 campers and leaving 29 missing and feared dead.

About 1,000 U.S. soldiers were evacuated from several small camps near the border

with Communist North Korea, said Sgt. Major Billy Foster of the 2nd Infantry Division. Sgt. Foster called flood damage to the camps the worst "I've seen in one place in my 30-year army career." The deluge wrecked entire villages. Streams were clogged with overturned cars. Alleys were piled with sodden furniture pulled from homes knee deep in water.

Some 22,300 hectares of farm land were covered by dark brown flood water.

About 10 tonnes of mortar rounds, antipersonnel land mines and other ammunition were missing after flood waters swept through an army depot near the border with North Korea, defence ministry officials said.

U.S. military camps also lost an unspecified amount of small arms ammunition to floods, the U.S. military command said.

Soldiers with mine detectors were combing the area, but officials feared many small land mines may have been swept downstream.

American balloonist hazards risky ocean route in bid to circle globe

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP) — An American daredevil soared over the Argentine pampas in a balloon, streaking towards the South Atlantic on the first leg of a hazardous quest to circle the world.

Hoping to become the first balloonist to round the globe, Chicago stockbroker Steve Fossett lifted off late Friday from Mendoza in western Argentina, starting an attempted 32,185-kilometre odyssey.

With propane burners roaring, Mr. Fossett rode the 46-metre balloon Solo Spirit into a moonlit sky as hundreds of people cheered him on from a soccer stadium 970 kilometres west of Buenos Aires.

Circumnavigating the Earth in a balloon is one of aviation's last unachieved feats, Mr. Fossett has chart-

ed a 14- to 18-day course that would take him from west to east around the southern hemisphere, mostly over oceans.

Mr. Fossett admitted before takeoff that this was his riskiest of four attempts to circle the world, nine-tenths of the course being over water.

"You have to believe that you are going to succeed with this flight because a water landing would be very dangerous," Mr. Fossett said. "I'm using the same capsule I've used for seven balloon flights, and it's seaworthy."

Andres Tricaza, 12, was in the crowd bidding farewell to the helium and hot air balloon. "It's the biggest thing I've seen in my life! One day I'd like to do something like this."

Mr. Fossett's command centre at Washington University in St. Louis said

the balloon was at 7,200 metres early Saturday, cruising at 114 kph, and would cross out onto the Atlantic after daylight.

If all goes according to plan, the 54-year-old Fossett will hazard a four-day crossing of the windswept South Atlantic towards South Africa before flying onward to Australia and then east over the Pacific back to South America.

A bone-chilling temperature of minus 50 degrees was registered outside the balloon's capsule. But Mr. Fossett was in a fleece-lined jacket within a closed, heated cabin.

Nonetheless, conditions were rugged in the 1.22 metre by 2.13 metre capsule, which was crammed with communications gear, batteries, water and enough military-style rations to last days

adrift should Mr. Fossett ditch at sea.

Two American flags fluttered from the capsule.

Competition is intense to achieve RTW — ballooning parlance for "Round the World" — and most attempts have been made in the northern hemisphere.

Mr. Fossett's first attempt to circle Earth lasted just 36 hours, cut short in January 1996 by winter storms. A year later, he set the distance record: a 16,674-kilometre, six-day journey from St. Louis to Sultanpur, India. He landed after running short of fuel while awaiting Libyan clearance.

On Jan. 5, 1998, Mr. Fossett ended another attempt, landed 9,337 kilometres away from his starting point of St. Louis in a wheat field near Krasnodar, southern Russia.

Confusion reigns over Chechenya shooting reports

MOSCOW (R) — Russia and Chechenya kept up a steady flow of conflicting reports Saturday about an apparent border clash but agreed all was quiet on the frontier for now.

Russian and Chechen sources said Friday Russian troops and Chechen fighters had exchanged fire at the border of the separatist region in the early hours. Accounts differed widely.

Russian Deputy Interior Minister Leonid Shevtsov, a lieutenant-general, denied there had been any unusual military activity at all. Russian news agencies reported Saturday.

"Shevtsov said all military forces had been ordered to open fire only if directly attacked. He also stressed the situation in the region was generally stable," RIA news agency reported.

Chechen television did not mention the shooting reports.

Aslanbek Arsayev, Chechenya's internal secu-

rity minister, told Reuters in the Chechen regional capital Grozny everything was quiet along the 500-km border.

"I'm receiving information from all Chechen checkpoints on the border," he said. "The situation is under control. No accidents were reported. All is quiet."

In neighbouring Dagestan, a duty interior ministry spokesman echoed this assessment.

"If there were shootings or even more — armoured vehicles attacking for example — it would be difficult not to notice," he said by telephone. "It's not as if we all sit here and don't know what is happening."

But Mr. Arsayev's colleague, Chechen Foreign Minister Movladi Udugov painted a different picture. He told Ekho Moskvyy radio station the Chechen cabinet was meeting in emergency session Saturday to discuss the situation.

He said Friday Russian helicopter gunships and armoured vehicles attacked

the Chechen border overnight and that morning.

"Chechen border guards were engaged in combat last night and today in the morning near Borodinovskaya village on the border with Dagestan," Mr. Udugov told Reuters.

Mr. Udugov, who telephoned Reuters in Moscow, said several Chechens had been wounded, some of them critically, and there were unspecified losses on the Russian side as well.

"All responsibility lies with the Russian leadership. It is an infringement of our peace treaty," Mr. Udugov said. But another senior minister told Reuters there had been no fighting on the border apart from "the usual gunshots".

RIA, citing police sources, said a Russian police outpost on the Dagestan side of the border came under fire from the direction of the border. Local police told the agency there were no casualties and Russian units did not retaliate.

RIA said the cross-border shooting capped a chaotic night in the village on the Dagestani side. One person was killed and another wounded when police tried to quell a drunken brawl. Hundreds of villagers then attacked a local police station.

Chechenya fought a bitter war for independence from Moscow in 1994-96 which ended when Russian troops withdrew from the region. Chechenya claims full independence, although no other country recognises it as a sovereign state.

Russian politicians have warned of increasing instability in Chechenya and the surrounding regions. Chechenya's president, Aslan Maskhadov, survived an assassination attempt last month.

Mr. Maskhadov, who is on a visit to the United States travelling on a Russian passport, told a conference Friday Chechenya would never give up its independence.

More Indonesian troops pull out from E. Timor

JAKARTA (AFP) — The last batch of some 1,000 combat troops pledged to be withdrawn by Indonesian President B.J. Habibie from troubled East Timor left the territory Saturday, the military said.

"I have just returned for the farewell ceremony. Six companies of men, from the marines and Kosrad (the army strategic command) have left on board two boats," the head of staff of the East Timor military command, Lieutenant Colonel Supadi told AFP.

The latest batch, six companies or between 600 and 700 troops, were the last of about 1,000 troops that Jakarta had pledged to pull out from East Timor in the initial phase of a forces reduction exercise there, Col. Supadi said.

He said two navy boats, the Teluk Ratai and the Teluk Bone, left carrying the soldiers to Jakarta and Surabaya on Java Island.

The first batch of soldiers, 398 special forces and combat infantry troops, left East Timor on July 28.

On Aug. 5, three companies of soldiers and the police mobile brigade, had also departed from East Timor but they left as part of a regular troop rotation and their replacement had arrived in Dili, the main town in East Timor the following day, Col. Supadi said.

"The three combat companies have now been replaced by three non-combat companies ... they are unarmed," he said of the new arrivals.

Col. Supadi said that one of the three new companies was from the military health division.

Mr. Habibie pledged a "gradual" troop withdrawal in a meeting with East Timorese Bishop Carlos Belo in June, shortly after he replaced ex-President Suharto.

Mr. Suharto had ordered the 1975 invasion of the former Portuguese colony and its annexation the following year.

Officials have said that the forces reduction will be followed by others in the future but no details given.

Critics here and abroad have

'Australia's Soviet spies endangered Americans in Pacific'

CANBERRA, Australia (AP) — Intelligence gathered by Australians serving as Soviet spies during World War II put the lives of American military personnel at risk and jeopardised key U.S. operations in the Pacific, according to the authors of a newly-published book.

The authors, Australian academics Des Ball and David Horner, based their conclusion on a detailed study of once highly-secret material gathered from signals intercepted by American and British intelligence services.

Details of the intercepted signals were released in the United States in the early 1990s.

The new book, "Australia's KGB Network: Breaking the Codes," will go on sale from Monday in Australia.

The authors say there were about 10 Australian members of a Soviet spy ring which operated in Canberra during the war years.

Its key member was allegedly an Australian the Soviets code named KJod, the Russian version of Claude.

His Soviet contacts reportedly included Semyen Makarov, a member of the Russian intelligence service NKGB, a predecessor of the KGB, who was then stationed at the Soviet embassy in Canberra.

"The information leaked through the Soviet embassy (in Canberra) dealt with American operations in the Philippines and had the potential to make the American task more difficult," Mr. Horner told The Associated Press Saturday.

"This information was being used — whether

deliberately or inadvertently — contrary to Australian national interests, possibly to the extent of putting the lives of Australian and American servicemen at risk."

The Australian spy network allegedly included a typist in the office of Australia's external affairs minister, H.V. (Doc) Evatt; a member of Australia's secret service and at least two well-placed members of Australia's diplomatic service.

The information KJod gathered was passed to Moscow and reached the Japanese in the Manchurian city of Harbin, where both the Soviets and the Japanese had consulates during the war.

Mr. Horner said that he and Mr. Ball believe, but cannot prove, that Stalin deliberately leaked the material gathered in Australia to the Japanese.

"It was in the Soviet's interest to prolong the fighting in the southwest Pacific so as to enable them to enter the war after the defeat of Germany," Mr. Horner said.

"Such an action by the Soviet authorities would not have been unusual." The authors said information passed along to the Japanese via the Soviet-Australian spy connection included a decision by the U.S. Pacific Fleet to delay a landing on the eastern tip of the Bicol Peninsula on Luzon in the Philippines.

Also relayed was an American decision to invade the Camotes Sea, northwest of the island of Leyte in the Philippines, and the completion of an American torpedo boat base on Mindoro Island in the Philippines, they said.

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Editorial and Advertising offices
 Jordan Press Foundation,
 University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman

Telephones: 5684311, 5699634, 5667171, 5603585

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A public dressingdown

A FOREIGN diplomat once remarked that in his country the press undresses government officials. He meant the comment figuratively of course, but nonetheless his purpose was to illustrate that his government was constantly being watched and held accountable for its actions as well as its inactions. Accountability — the word need not send shivers up the spine of government if it dutifully goes about its business and, in so doing, makes its work transparent to the public it has been appointed to serve.

Isn't it a humiliating shame that once again His Majesty King Hussein is the one to reveal government incompetence? Is it not frightening enough that citizens have had to continue to suffer through a water contamination crisis with no clear answers to its cause, only to learn from their King that two other major institutions have demonstrated negligence so severe that the lives of ordinary people were at risk and the welfare of the nation was jeopardised?

Those who would say that the bureaucracy is so complicated that such issues become increasingly difficult to correct are just making excuses.

All that need be asked is, if those in managerial, administrative and supervisory positions — and these include our most senior government officials — are not prepared to take on their responsibilities with a significant measure of work ethic, how can you expect the employees down the line to perform any better?

"[T]he near miss of two huge aircraft over Amman a few months ago would have been a catastrophe that was avoided by God's grace," the King wrote to Crown Prince Hassan. His message to officials high and low could not be any clearer — get your act together! An air collision and the shut down of electrical power to half the nation are not matters to be dismissed. Who is the government to talk about a culture of shame when it is unable or unwilling to fulfil its basic obligations to the people and country?

Was not the King's anger at the shameful example of the public orphanage scandal last year enough to teach our officials and all future officials a lesson? Obviously not. So why bother with all the farcical talk about instituting transparency? If officials do not have respect for themselves, one cannot really expect them to respect the public they are meant to serve. It is little wonder then, that the government is fighting tooth and nail to pass its draconian press and publications law. Buttoning up the press keeps the government fully clothed.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Ra'i's Fahed Fanek said the grants the government receives from abroad are essential to the treasury. He urged the government to do its best to keep grants flowing into the country. In 1997 Jordan received grants worth over \$400 million and of these, Dr. Fanek said, oil rebates from Iraq amounted to \$188 million, aid grants from U.S. and EU totalled \$58 million and \$46 million. Japanese contribution were \$40 million, and U.N. agencies provided \$70 million. He said these grants amount to 5.5 % of Jordan's GDP and translate to a per capita amount of \$90 per annum. The writer urged the government to ensure a continual flow of this extremely beneficial form of external aid which helps the balance of payments as well as helps reduce the current account deficit.

Al Doustour's Oreib Rintawi speculated over the possibilities of various candidates for the post of prime minister in Israel after the next general elections. The possible candidates he evaluated were incumbent Premier Benjamin Netanyahu, Labour leader Ehud Barak, Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon, Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai, and Tel Aviv Mayor Roni Milo. Rintawi said Labour's Barak has 34 per cent support, right wing Likud-nik Netanyahu 28 per cent, and rightist Milo and Likud-nik Sharon both obtained 15 per cent each, according to a recent poll, said Rintawi. He said the above figures show that the rightists, right centrists and the hawk are the candidates most likely to lead in the upcoming elections, and they represent the hard-liner streams. He said the differences among the candidates are very narrow making it possible for Sharon to be the next Israeli prime minister, said Rintawi.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

Dr. Fahed Fanek

Agricultural sector in disarray

WE ARE accustomed to describing Jordan as an agricultural country while in reality such a classification no longer fits the Kingdom. For tens of years, the contribution of agriculture was diminishing. Currently, this sector contributes no more than 6 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP). Manpower engaged in agriculture does not exceed 60,000 labourers or less than 6 per cent of the overall labour force, while some 100,000 guest workers, mainly Egyptians, are undertaking the major part of agricultural production in both subsectors of cultivation and livestock and poultry raising.

The agricultural lobbyists try to overstate the importance of the sector by claiming that other activities related to agriculture contribute around 28 per cent of GDP. This may be true but it is also applicable to other sectors. The agriculture related activities include transportation, packaging, trade, industry, water, energy and other services.

Certainly we have no intention of underestimating the importance of agriculture from various points of view.

Agricultural produce forms around 41 per cent of national exports, 20 per cent of which represent foodstuffs. A large portion of the population still depends on agriculture for their livelihood. They represent a sector of the population that deserves to be favoured. It is obvious that had it not been for agriculture, most of the countryside population would have moved to the cities, creating in the process various social bottlenecks and problems.

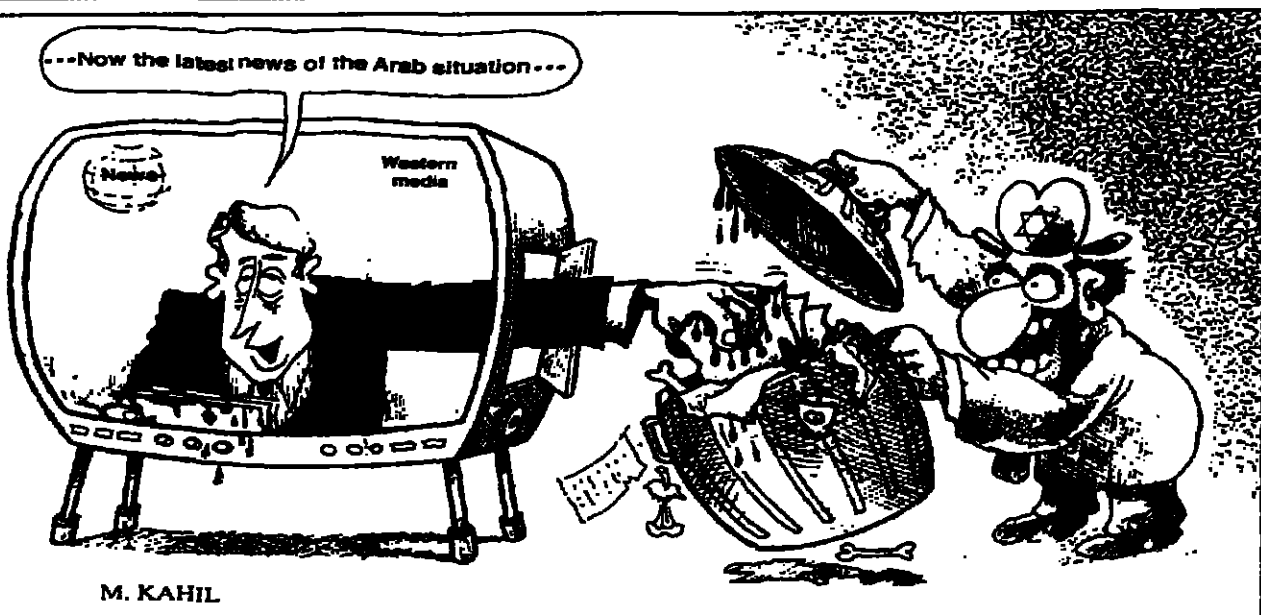
The importance of development and modernisation of agriculture become evident when we recognise that the food gap in the trade balance amounts to a staggering JD1,750 million annually; the per capita share of this gap is around JD116 a year, which gives agriculture some kind of priority in import replacement strategy, as the domestic market is available and export markets are plenty. Still, agricultural production should be matched by processing of products to convert perishable fruits and vegetables into foodstuffs that can be stored and transported throughout the year.

Jordan is also blessed by a sizeable animal wealth.

There are around 2.6 million sheep, 64 thousand cows, 2,500 poultry farms with a production capacity of 120 tonnes of meat and over one billion eggs a year.

On the negative side, it should be pointed out that the agricultural sector that contributes no more than 6 per cent of GDP is consuming 70 per cent of all available water resources and demanding more. Shortage of water is one of the most formidable obstacles facing expansion in agriculture.

It is worth noting also that agriculture is subsidised in most countries of the world. The Israeli budget for instance earmarked some \$200 million to support Israeli farmers. Jordan used to subsidise agriculture generously, but the economic adjustment programme and the pressures exerted by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) caused agricultural subsidies to dry out year after year which put farmers in a difficult position, especially as Jordan opens up its markets to the world and expects its farmers to survive the coming competition on their own.



EU should play a pivotal role in the peace process

By Pascal B. Karmy

WHILE THE United States mediation between Israel and the Palestinians has bogged down in a deadlock, the European Union (EU) has tried to influence Israel to comply with its commitments to the Oslo accords. One of the first measures which the EU took was to boycott the products of the Jewish settlements in the occupied territories including Jerusalem and the Golan Heights. This is one of the right courses to adopt inasmuch as those settlements were illegally established in the occupied territories. The Israeli government reacted rather violently to the EU step, and even certain Knesset members compared the boycott to that of Jews during the Nazi years. The Israeli government responded by declaring that it will preclude the EU from playing a role in the peace process.

This limited boycott however is not enough to influence Israel to honour its commitments. The EU should take more stringent measures to force Israel to follow the way of peace inasmuch as the EU has realised that the deadlock in the peace process has given birth to an unstable regional atmosphere, to impatience of the peoples concerned and to fear in the international community (See The Role of the EU in the peace process and the future assistance to the Middle East published by

the EU commission).

The EU consists of a group of nations most interested in the Middle East as indeed close relations of the states of the EU with the Middle East had been established centuries ago beginning with the Crusaders in the ninth century and the Napoleon Campaign in the eighteenth century to mention only two episodes, of the history of the Middle East. In 1973 during Copenhagen Summit, the EU issued a resolution calling for the withdrawal of Israel from the occupied territories, for the respect of the sovereignty of states within secure and recognised boundaries and the legal rights of the Palestinians. The Venice Declaration of 1980 adopted two principles namely the right of the Palestinians to self-determination and the necessity of associating the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in the negotiations which might ensue. Moreover the EU emphasised the principle of the exchange of territory for peace as provided in the U.N. Security resolutions 242 and 338.

Unfortunately the role of the EU has been, during and after the Madrid conference of 1991, relegated to a "complementary" or rather secondary role, as the U.S. and the then Soviet Union sponsored the Madrid Conference. After the collapse of the Soviet Union the U.S. became in effect

the sole facilitator of the peace process but with no concrete results. However the EU played a very important role economically and financially. Thus it presided over the committee on regional economic development, co-chaired by the committees on refugees, water and environment respectively. In order to advance the peace process the EU has generously contributed large funds so as to improve the economic and social situation in the Palestinian territories and has also encouraged the creation of democratic structures.

With the rise of Netanyahu to power, however, the situation worsened. The prime minister has caused provocations and difficulties thus ruining the peace process. The EU often criticised Israeli actions especially the building of settlements and the blockading of the West Bank and Gaza Strip which have had a devastating effect on the Palestinian economy. In addition, the Israeli-Palestinian interim agreements concerning the opening of a safe passage between Gaza and the West Bank and the establishment of a airport and airport in Gaza were not implemented although they were all financed by the EU. The latter realised that Israel has made the West Bank and Gaza entirely dependent on it economically and politically, while the financial assistance granted by the EU served only to pay the

salaries of the employees of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and to fill the deficit of the latter's annual budget.

At the Amsterdam Summit held in June 1997 the EU supported the right of the Palestinians to self-determination without excluding the possibility of statehood. It submitted to the two parties a so-called "Code of Good Conduct" — wherein the Palestinians undertake to exert their efforts to ensure the security of Israel, and Israel will respect the demographic and territorial status quo and the economic agreements. However all those initiatives on the part of the EU were to no avail as Israel maintained its occupation and settlement policy and continued enforcing closures of the occupied territories.

Still, the EU could take more drastic actions vis-a-vis Israel. It could adopt an active policy independent of the U.S., notwithstanding Israeli opposition, inasmuch as the U.S. has been inactive in the doldrums for several months. The EU could suspend commercial relations with Israel, freeze the interim economic agreement as long as Israel does not honour the economic and political obligations and human rights as stipulated in that agreement. Those measures do not amount to an embargo as that imposed on Iraq nor would they constitute a blockade as that

applied by Israel upon the Palestinian people. Such measures will make Israel understand that there is a price to pay if it continues a policy of force and subjugation against the Palestinians. It is high time for the EU to show its metal as one of the greatest groupings of world powers and inasmuch as Professor Samuel Huntington suggested a few years ago that "The baton of world leadership next century may pass from America not to Japan, or China, or Russia, but to a European Federation."

However the first question which comes to the mind of the reader: Why should not the Arab states themselves take the above-mentioned measures against Israel? I agree that the Arab states should suspend commercial relations with Israel, boycott its goods and products and close all liaison offices recently opened in their countries. The Arab boycott of Israeli offices should be rejuvenated to achieve the above results. Jordan however may be an exception considering its peculiar geographic position and its economic relations with the PNA.

The writer was an advocate in Palestine in 1944 and, for many years, legal officer at UNRWA headquarters in Beirut and Vienna. He contributed this article to the Jordan Times.

Small is not beautiful

By Riad Al Khouri

SMALL MAY be ugly after all, as Jordanians struggling to operate in a stagnant local market are learning. Apart from record purchases of bottled water in west Amman, nobody is buying much of anything in Jordan these days. (I am even told that, horror of horrors, the price of land in Amman is down.) Consequently, many businesses have to put up with excess capacity as a large number of people remain unemployed.

The obvious alternative to flogging the tiny moribund horse that is Jordan's internal market is to export, as well as to integrate economically with neighbours and with the world at large. Of course Jordan isn't the only small economy in the region. In Lebanon last month, Naser Saidi, first deputy governor of that country's central bank, made a plea for Lebanese-Syrian integration. Noting that Lebanon and Syria had complementary economies Dr. Saidi remarked that, "given the size of the two countries, both would gain from closer integration and increased specialisation as this would generate economies of scale." He added that "Syria and Lebanon would benefit from the availability of a local market with close to 20 million consumers, and would be able, as a result of lower costs and prices, to be more competitive internationally and gain export markets." However, Dr. Saidi warned that though the existing Syro-Lebanese protocols signed in 1991-7 form the basis for a partnership, trade between

the two countries remained weak compared with the trade of each with others. The small Lebanese and Syrian horses, having been — if residents of west Amman will pardon the expression — brought to water, did not drink, and much more needs to be done.

In fact, this is a problem for most Arab economies: Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and others tend not to trade with their neighbours but with distant markets. This is often political, with a significant recent example being the now easing boycott of Jordanian products by some Gulf states. However, the reasons for lack of trade are usually more straightforward: for example, Syria can't buy jet planes or precision instruments from Lebanon for the simple and obvious reason that the Lebanese don't produce them. (Whether Lebanon can or should do so is another question.) On the other hand, the products which some Arab countries can and do produce are sometimes not of the right quality, specifications, style etc, and this factor also tends to inhibit trade. What is needed to overcome this problem is significantly more interaction and coordination at the regional level by both the state and business to start ironing out these commercial problems in order to promote inter-Arab trade.

At the same time, in Lebanon, Jordan, and elsewhere around the world, there is a realisation that for small countries, integration into the global market could offer the best prospect to overcome the limited scale of the domestic economy and increase produc-

tivity through specialisation. Does this contradict the goal of regional integration? No, according to many, including the authors of papers in a new publication entitled Regional Integration and Multilateral Cooperation in the Global Economy. Edited by J.J. Teunissen, director of the Hague-based Forum on Debt and Development, the book puts forward the increasingly accepted premise that regional arrangements are necessary complements to and building blocks of global institutions.

One of the book's papers is of particular interest to people in our part of the world, "Regional Economic Interaction in the Middle East and North Africa" by Mohamed El-Erian. Dr. El-Erian is deputy director in the Middle Eastern Department at the IMF and was involved in the negotiation of macro-economic programmes in a number of countries, including Jordan. In other words, he knows whereof he speaks when he notes that "appropriate economic policies are a prerequisite for the deepening of efficient international economic links," be it in a region or outside. He remarks however that "at the most basic level, there is now widespread agreement that the domestic policy stance in most MENA [Middle East and North Africa] countries was not strong enough to offset the deterioration in the external economic environment." In other words, the reforms and other positive changes taking place in government policy in Jordan and elsewhere in the region, though laudable, are not enough to cope with the many negative regional devel-

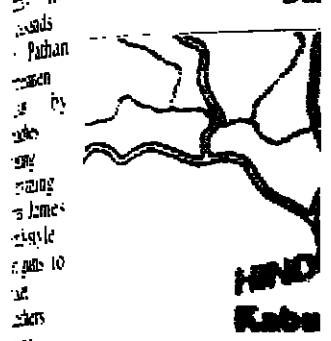
opments including among other things the economic consequences of the Netanyahu government and the continuing embargo of Iraq.

One of the elements lacking in the region, Dr. El-Erian remarks, is a strong institutional setup "that provides a forum for discussion of regional issues," including the commercial ones mentioned above. Such activities as the annual meetings of the Mediterranean Development Forum, a partnership of the development community in MENA, may suggest ways to fill this gap. To convene in Marraksh next month, it will bring together senior officials (including Mohamed El-Erian and, if we're lucky, Naser Saidi), influential members of the private sector, and representatives of civil society. The aim is to encourage private sector involvement, and mobilise civil society for greater participation in policy dialogue to assert more influence over policy outcomes. Civil society and the private sector at large must have a say in the rules by which the economy is run. The stronger policy measures for reform and regional rapprochement and integration needed to get us out of our current predicament may then be easier to formulate and implement. The alternative to participation, reform, and integration will be to make Jordan, Lebanon and other small economies increasingly unable to cope with regional and international change.

The writer is the director of the Jordanian Economic Development Association. He contributed this article to the Jordan Times.

Features
 Pakistan
 to take
 arms

By Jason Burke
 in Darfur, Sudan
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 where hundreds of
 were reportedly tor
 and killed for alleged
 The ruling party has
 called to come clean,
 critics say national recon
 depends on it.

By Christof Maletzky
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 by the People's Organisation
 while it was in exile in

Pakistan tries to take over arms bazaar

By Jason Burke
in Darra Adam Khel, Pakistan

HIDDEN IN a rocky fold of the foothills below the Khyber Pass lies the small town of Darra Adam Khel. Its name may reek of the romance of Pakistan's north-west frontier, but the reality smells of cordite, gun grease and sweat.

For Darra is less a town than a giant gun factory. Its bazaars are stacked not with fruit, but with gleaming AK47s, Armaletes, Berettas and Brownings. In a warren of dimly lit workshops, thousands of Pathan tribesmen squat by benches making everything from James Bond-style pen guns to rocket launchers. Among them shop owners bargain with smugglers and arms dealers. Darra is the nearest thing in Asia to a weapons superstore.

For decades the Pakistan government

has ignored the town. It has had little choice. The town is in tribal territory where the only effective law is that of the Pathan chiefs.

But earlier this year government administrators decided it was time for a change. They want Darra to make weapons under licence for big overseas arms firms. A company in Belgium is already said to be interested. The politicians and bureaucrats believe it is time for Darra to become a proper, national, foreign currency earning industry.

"Darra could provide skilled, cheap workshops for the arms manufacturers of the world," said Sardar Mehtab Khan, chief minister of the North West Frontier Province.

"These men can use their skills to produce legitimate, high quality products for export such as sporting shotguns or handguns for police forces. There would be investment in the town and dollars for the national exchequer. Everybody wins," Mr. Khan said.

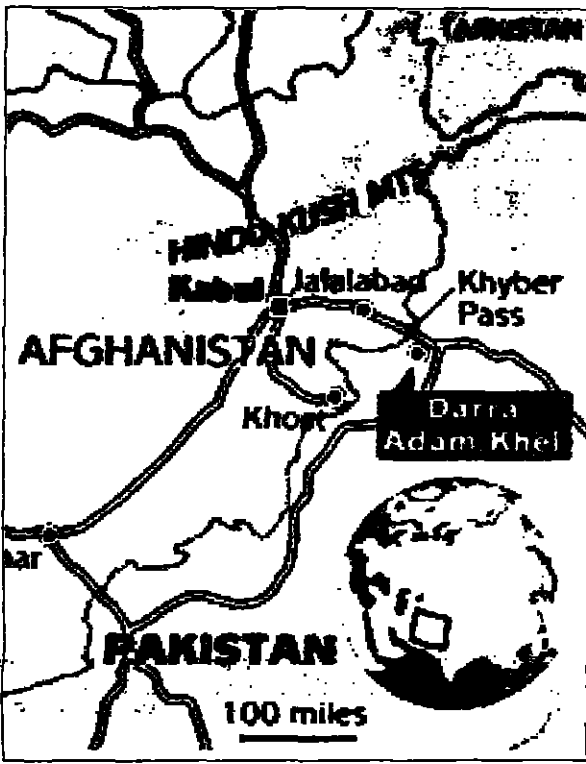
Unfortunately the men of Darra do not think they are going to win anything at all. They view the scheme as an unwelcome government meddling. In the town the mood was grim.

"They have to be joking," said one gun dealer, shouting to make himself heard over the crash of new Kalashnikovs (priced at \$50) being tested in the street outside.

"The whole point is that we look after ourselves and don't answer to some fat bureaucrat or policeman. If the government takes over then a few big people far away will make a lot of



The Pathan gunsmiths of Pakistan are resisting attempts by the government to control their trade (photo by Richard Jones/Rex Features)



money and the rest of us will be left with nothing." Another dealer spat into the dirt when told that high-ranking officers from the Pakistan army ordinance factory were planning to tour the workshops to give advice to the craftsmen on how to bring their products up to international standards.

"The government just wanted to get its hands on our money," he said. "When we want roads and clean water they are nowhere to be seen. When they want to make money out of us they suddenly appear. Well they can turn round and go back where they came from."

The confrontation is 150 years old. It is a legacy from the years when Britain and Russia played the "Great Game" across south and central Asia. The British created the tribal territories in the mid 19th century to protect the western borders of the Raj against Russian encroachment. The Pathan warrior tribes were granted almost total autonomy in return for loyalty to the Crown.

The system worked well and was left virtually unchanged when Pakistan gained its independence in 1947. Now there are estimated to be more than 5 million Pathan tribesmen living in the territories.

But, according to Faizal Quazi, editor of the local daily the Khyber Mail, the system is under strain.

"Central government is beginning to see the tribal areas as a bit of an international embarrassment," said Mr. Quazi. "It doesn't look good for the world's newest nuclear power to have huge areas of its own territory which it basically can't control."

Recently the government has begun to make moves to win the hearts and minds of the tribesmen. New roads, schools and hospitals have been built. Last year the tribes were allowed to vote in federal elections for the first time. And although neither the prime minister nor the president has visited the tribal areas while in office a committee has been set up to listen to their grievances.

According to Lateef Afridi, the newly elected member of parliament for the tribal territories flanking the Khyber Pass and a chief of the Afridi Pathans, it is not enough.

"All the tribesmen see is corruption and graft and systems that are rotten to the core. The government are going to have to really commit themselves fully to investing in social and economic development if they want the tribal areas to be happy with more integration."

The question is now whether the government has the patience and the resources to follow Mr. Afridi's advice. There have been heavy hints from government sources that a harsher solution might be necessary.

Tariq Ali Afridi, who runs Darra's hashish shop, laughed at the idea of the Pakistan army forcing the scheme on the town. "There are a hundred thousand guns in this town and 5 million tribesmen in the hills around us."

"Everyone has carried a weapon since he was a child, everyone is a warrior and everyone is a Pathan before he is a Pakistani. If the Pakistan army want to come, let them. It will not be a very pleasant sight."

— The Independent

Brides with cash on offer in Sri Lanka

By Narayanan Madhavan
Reuters

COLOMBO — The classified advertisement in the Sunday Observer makes stark reading. "Buddhist Gobi business father seeks a professional partner (only doctors, engineers) for his pretty and educated daughter, 21 years, 5' 5.5" height. Dowry more than 15 million rupees (\$227,273). Please write with horoscope."

A Gobi is one of the castes in Sri Lankan society. Seeking a wife with a dowry is common throughout the sub-continent. And women's groups and analysts say little has happened to change the law and make the practice illegal in Sri Lanka, as it is in

neighbouring India. They say there is no incentive for social change because Sri Lankan women otherwise enjoy equal rights.

"Everyone is openly against it (giving dowries) but privately supports it," Kumari Jayawardena, feminist writer and secretary of Sri Lanka's Social Scientists Association, told Reuters. "It comes up in discussions and newspapers. And then it dies out."

A habit without barriers

Even with the ban, giving dowries remains widespread in predominantly Hindu India, with which Sri Lanka shares many customs including the caste system, a rigid social hierarchy and a strong belief in astrology. "Dowry deaths" — suicides by women and murders by wealth-seeking husbands or their parents — were the reason Indian authorities banned the custom.

Dowries can take many forms in Sri Lanka with rubbers, estates, jewellery, and a much-sought-after house in Colombo on offer in advertisements seeking bridegrooms, not just for more traditional women but also for educated career women. And the custom cuts across barriers of religion, economic status and language.

The Buddhist Sinhala-speaking majority, Roman Catholics and the mainly Hindu Tamils, all offer dowries. They usually range between 500,000 (\$7,575) and three million rupees (\$45,500) for middle-class matches, and are lowered if a woman is working or has family property.

"Salary 12,000 (rupees), cash 2.5 million or cash and property 5.0 million, car available," one advertisement said.

Men seeking women do not state prices, but often indicate their status with details of land, property and incomes and those living overseas invite women willing to emigrate.

But wealth is not the only consideration in finding a suitable mate. A person's horoscope is often also very important.

"Saturn 7th (house) with substantial assets," says one advertisement aimed at potential groom.

Columnist Anoma Pieris, writing in the Lanka Monthly Digest magazine said the first priority of people seeking marriage seemed to be "to continue blood relationships — of race, caste, religion. The horoscope, with its malefic and advantages, aids the process of elimination."

"The second objective is to offer wealth, or the opportunities to acquire wealth... as a sign of improving or continuing the couple's social status."

A pianist with property

Sometimes, advertisements

also emphasise cultural and career-oriented features to impress Westernised men.

"She has passed Western music piano final too. Dowry worth two million rupees including a building block from Colombo," read one advertisement.

The colonial state council tried to outlaw the custom of dowries in 1937 when the British ruled Sri Lanka. Jayawardena said. Voting was even, but the speaker cast his decisive ballot to leave the system intact.

"The debate on the issue regarded the whole thing as a joke," she said, adding that it was conducted by men who must have taken handsome dowries themselves. Since then there has been no official debate on the issue.

"The idea that a man has a right to a dowry is still there. We don't have dowry deaths, but who knows?"

But Sri Lanka is not like India where couples live with the husband's parents. Sri Lankan couples tend to set up their own homes, and often live with the bride's parents after the wedding. This has reduced the "mother-in-law" problem which has resulted in violence or worse in India, Jayawardena said.

Sri Lankan women also enjoy equal inheritance rights and more freedoms than their Indian counterparts, she said.

"Women wear short skirts here. It is patriarchy still but not as blatant."

Ruling party haunted by ghosts of the dungeons

Namibian leaders are facing growing pressure to admit that atrocities took place during the 80s at their exile base in Angola, where hundreds of people were reportedly tortured and killed for alleged spying. The ruling party has rejected calls to come clean, but critics say national reconciliation depends on it.

By Christof Maletsky

WINDHOEK — "He was a total wreck when I met him in Mukakuyu prison in 1985," recalls Reinhard Kalla Gertze — "a little man, very vulnerable, almost like a severely malnourished child."

Gertze will never forget the final sufferings of his long-time friend, Bernardus Petrus, nicknamed "Beni." The prison where he died the following year as part of the notorious "Lubango Dungeons," which were run by Namibia's ruling South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) while it was in exile in

southern Angola.

At least 1,500 people are said to have died in detention at the Lubango base — mostly from torture or starvation. Many had been wrongly accused of being spies, according to those who survived the ordeal.

Pressure is now building on SWAPO to tell the full story of Lubango and to apologise for misdeeds committed there. There are growing calls for a truth commission, on the lines of the South African model, to foster national reconciliation by dealing openly with killings, disappearances and human rights abuses.

Twenty years ago, Gertze — now aged 37 and working for a non-governmental organisation in Windhoek — left what was then South African-occupied territory in search of education with SWAPO in exile. He was helped to feel by Petrus, a political activist being sought by the apartheid regime.

Fired with revolutionary fervour, Petrus became a political commissar with SWAPO's military wing, the People's Liberation Army of Namibia, and studied for a while in Bulgaria. But both he and Gertze were later accused of being South African agents and thrown in the dungeons.

Torture was reported to be widespread. Detainees complained of being burnt and beaten. Many were kept in isolation. Rations were paltry.

Gertze recalls late 1986 — "the year of darkness and hell, in which disease struck us in our mass dungeons. Not 'disease' in the real sense of the word, but malnourishment. Many of my inmates died. Many innocent Namibians were killed that year."

Petrus died in the November. He was very weak, and Gertze remembers a warder giving his friend some form of intravenous drip. Rather than strength, Petrus called out in alarm, saying he was losing feeling in his feet.

"Beni was paralysed and he was losing his sight. He told us to tell the old man (meaning his father back in Namibia) what we had seen. He also said he would not rise again."

Petrus started vomiting green fluid and doctors ordered other detainees to leave him. They never saw him again.

Another friend in prison, Oiva Angula, says: "Beni's spirit remained unbroken. What hurt him so much was not what his tormentors did to him and his inmates, but what the people of conscience did not do to stop the madness within SWAPO in exile."

Detainees were freed as the dungeons were emptied before Namibian independence in 1990. But Angula wants the Lubango story told in full.

He says: "This should be done while some of those who masterminded this calamity are still alive. They need to tell their part of the story. I want to know what propelled them to such depths of bestiality. I, as their victim, am yearning to tell my part. This, I think, will start a process of healing leading towards real reconciliation."

Another former inmate, Johannes "Mistake" Mihe Gaomab, says he is still being persecuted by the authorities. He says he was arrested and questioned last October, accused of plotting to overthrow the government, but not charged.

He fears that there may be a plan to make him "disappear," and has given details of his case to an organisation called Breaking the Wall of Silence (BWS), which was set up a couple of years ago to help former detainees.

The government has so far rejected calls for a truth commission or an admission of wrongdoing at Lubango. A SWAPO book, called Their Blood Waters Our Freedom, refers to 2,000 "heroes" who died in exile of diseases such as beriberi. But the party appears

reluctant to shed more light on the subject, and has lashed out at those calling for it.

When the BWS movement was launched, Garoeb, the labour minister and party general secretary who died last September, called on SWAPO members to "prepare for civil war."

Officials have also scorned the Council of Churches in Namibia for organising a conference to address the issue of reconciliation. And when Siegfried Groth, a pastor of the German Lutheran Church, wrote The Wall of Silence, dealing with the controversial issue of SWAPO dissidents in exile, President Sam Nujoma went on television to attack "allegations and lies" in the book.

However, Joseph Diescho, a former SWAPO official and university lecturer who is now a vocal political analyst in Namibia, accuses Nujoma and the party of reverting "to the finger-pointing tactics of the movement in exile."

At issue is a process of healing, truthfulness and accountability, which forms the basis of national reconciliation, he says.

The period in exile was very difficult, he points out. South Africa sent spies to infiltrate SWAPO, and the discovery of agents in their midst bred an

atmosphere of fear and suspicion among party officials. "It became very difficult for them to distinguish between real and imaginary agents."

Diescho continues: "The majority of the people hurt were not spies, but people who had the courage to ask questions and who, as a result, were branded enemy agents."

Namibians were only asking party leaders for answers. "Just as a child would ask its parents, 'Please explain...'"

SWAPO should acknowledge that the party "sometimes went too far," says Diescho.

He believes that the right person to take the lead is President Nujoma. "If he tells people what happened, they will be able to commit themselves to reconciliation. The only way out of the situation created by the unresolved detainee issue is for SWAPO to acknowledge that atrocities were committed and that people disappeared and to apologise."

"Only then can Namibians move forward as a nation,"

The writer is assistant news editor of The Namibian newspaper.

— Gemini News

Growing glut to overshadow oil in 1999 — IEA

LONDON (R) — The world's oil glut will get worse before it gets better with a huge excess of inventories set to spill over well into next year, the International Energy Agency (IEA) said Friday.

Publishing its first projections for 1999, the agency said it was expecting a modest recovery in global oil demand growth. But it warned that another downturn in Asia's sickly economies could mean more pain for oil producers already suffering from crude export prices at 10-year lows.

"It is difficult to foresee the excess stock overhang problem resolved until

well into 1999 at the earliest," the IEA said in its monthly Oil Market Report.

"So 1999 is likely to inherit an oil market heavily burdened with excess stocks, an unresolved Asian financial crisis (and) a delicate production agreement among OPEC and a few non-OPEC producers."

"If stocks stay high then that's certainly not going to be bullish for oil prices," added the IEA's Roberto Sieber.

Benchmark Brent Blend crude traded at just \$12.80 a barrel on Friday, a third lower than average prices last year.

The IEA said its initial

1999 projection was for demand growth of 1.6 million barrels a day to 76.3 million barrels daily from 74.7 million in 1998.

Incremental world oil demand this year is set to slip to 900,000 bpd marking a slump from two million barrels daily of growth in 1997.

Asian oil demand is set in 1998 to post an unprecedented downturn exacerbated by a slide in Russian oil use where the IEA said expectations for accelerated growth had been "severely dented."

The IEA sees Asian consumption rising next year to 20.25 million barrels daily from 19.77 million

this year and 19.83 million in 1997.

But it warned that a second dip in the Asian economies and weakening demand elsewhere would mean another round of oil producers' supply cuts.

"The 'Asian contagion' scenario did not come true in 1998 but it remains a real threat to non-Asian developing countries, their trade with the OECD and world oil demand," the agency said.

The picture is not one to please oil producers still struggling to reverse a build in oil stocks which set yet another record in June.

The IEA said supplies were still exceeding demand despite the two rounds of output cuts engineered since March by OPEC and other producing nations.

Commercial stocks held in the industrialised nations of the OECD hit 2.79 billion barrels at the end of June. That was 209 million more than a year earlier and 291 million higher than end-June 1996.

Space for heating oil and diesel inventories ahead of the northern hemisphere winter was already "increasingly scarce," the IEA said.

OPEC's best efforts so far have proved too puny to reverse the stockbuild. The Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) led a reduction of world supplies in July of some 500,000 bpd to 75.16 million.

But, said the IEA, even assuming further supply cuts the world's hoard of oil is likely to grow even further in July and August.

Meanwhile, OPEC heavyweight Saudi Arabia may back a third round of oil cuts even ahead of OPEC's November meeting if world oil prices were still low in late September, a Gulf source has said.

"However, if in September OPEC made good on its commitments (to cut output) and prices did not improve to much higher than where they are now, then Saudi Arabia and OPEC may not have to wait until November to agree on further cuts, the source who is familiar with official Saudi thinking told Reuters in a telephone interview.

But the Gulf source refused to say what price level the kingdom would

like to see oil at in September before moving to seek a new round of cuts.

He said Riyadh would study July and August output figures and if prices were low by late September and OPEC members had abided by the two earlier rounds of cuts, then OPEC "might even agree on additional cuts ahead of the November meeting."

Neighbouring Kuwait has said that if North Sea Brent failed to rise by some \$4 a barrel to \$17 in November then a cut of at least one million barrels per day (bpd) would be warranted.

Other key exporters have said it could be too early to speak of additional cuts after OPEC had agreed to cut supplies to a glutted market by a total of 2.6 million bpd so far this year under deals hammered out in Riyadh, Amsterdam and Vienna.

Saudi Arabia, the world's largest oil producer and exporter, played a key role in negotiating the agreements.

The Gulf source, responding to comments by Kuwait Oil Minister Sheikh Nasser Al Sabah in an interview with Reuters, defended OPEC's Jakarta accord in November to raise the total ceiling by 10 per cent to 27.5 million bpd.

Sheikh Saud, who has emerged as a price hawk since coming to office in March, said the Jakarta pact was a mistake which triggered the drop in world oil prices to recent 10-year lows.

The average price for Kuwaiti crudes has dropped by some \$7 a barrel to below \$10 since OPEC raised the ceiling. The price has improved slightly since the April 1 and July 1 cuts were agreed.

Saudi Arabia "does not appreciate the continuous assertions of Jakarta being the meeting which caused the current price situation...It brought OPEC's quota to what was actually being produced," the source said, referring to overproduction at the time by several members.

"We were trying to curb the violations and to allow those members who did not gain from the higher production level to take a share, one of those members was Kuwait," he said.

Under the accord, Kuwait's quota rose to

2.19 million bpd as of Jan. 1, from two million bpd but after the two rounds of cuts, Kuwait is now producing at 1.98 million bpd.

The Gulf source urged members "to look forward to the future and not with the prism of the past" to achieve the common goal of higher prices "given

the fact that we have already settled the issues of the past."

The source said Saudi Arabia "was the country that brought people to the table in Riyadh and facilitated OPEC's first accord in March and the second cut which started with the Amsterdam meetings."

"It also hosted a meet-

ing by Arab Gulf oil producers ahead of the second accord. There is no need to remind everybody of the pivotal role Saudi Arabia played in bringing the last OPEC agreement," he added.

OPEC ministers are due to hold an ordinary meeting in Vienna on November 25.

REUTERS • REUTERS • The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	-	1.7800	0.6141	1.4968	148.22	1.6211	1765.85	2.0070	5.6960
DE Mark	0.6818	-	0.3448	0.8408	82.13	0.8643	986.18	1.1275	3.3532
GB Sterling	1.6285	2.8991	-	2.4375	238.14	2.4771	2859.40	3.2684	9.7208
CH Franc	0.6881	118.88	0.4100	-	97.55	1.0159	1176.71	134.04	3.9865
JP Yen	0.0068	1.2169	0.4197	1.0233	-	1.0399	12.00	137.21	4.0808
CA Dollar	0.6574	1.1698	0.4034	0.9837	1.04	-	1153.95	1.3190	3.9228
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0133	0.3495	0.8662	1202.38	0.8659	-	11.43	3.3890
NL Guilder	0.4983	88.67	0.3068	74.57	72.81	0.7577	874.65	-	2.9734
FR Franc	0.1675	0.2991	0.1028	25.0678	24.47	0.2547	33.61	33.6100	-

Middle Eastern Currencies									
Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BAH	QAT	KUW	AED	LBP	EGP
US Dollar	-	0.7090	3.7505	0.3770	3.6400	0.3099	3.6727	1509.50	3.4190
Jordan Dinar	1.4104	-	5.2898	0.5317	6.1340	0.4328	6.1801	2129.06	4.8223
Saudi Riyal	0.2668	0.1890	-	0.1005	0.37	0.0818	0.98	402.48	0.9116
Bahrain Dinar	2.65	1.8808	9.9491	-	9.56	0.8141	9.74	4004.30	9.0697
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1948	1.0304	1.0304	-	0.0843	1.01	414.70	0.9393
Kuwait Dinar	3.2584	2.3102	12.2206	1.2283	11.86	-	11.97	4918.64	0.9309
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1930	1.0212	1.0205	0.9911	0.0836	-	411.01	0.9309
Lebanese/1000	0.66	0.4897	2.4848	0.2497	2.4114	0.2033	2.4331	-	2.2650
Egyptian	0.2925	0.2074	1.0970	0.1103	1.0646	0.0898	1.0742	441.50	-

Energy			Mid-East Currencies					
Oil#	Last	previous	Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
Brent	0.00	0.00	SA Riyal	0.2668	0.4747	0.16373	0.39823	39
W. Texas	15.81	15.83	A# Dirham	0.2723	0.4848	0.1672	0.40788	39.8284
Bonny	0.00	0.00	KW Dinar	3.2584	8.9048	2.0008	4.87805	475.844
Dubai	12.37	12.24	BH Dinar	0.3770	4.72367	1.62893	3.97141	388.048
UL Gas	136.03	135.00	CY Pound	1.9042	3.3895	1.1689	2.8502	278.432

Metal Prices			Libor Fixing				
Metal	Bid	Offer	Period	-1 - Month	-3 - Months	-6 - Months	-1 - Year
Gold (oz's)	286.4	286.9	Cncy	USD 5.6523	5.6875	5.7500	5.7813
Silver (oz's)	5.27	5.3	GBP	7.6250	7.6932	7.6914	7.6875
Platinum (oz's)	379.3	381.3	JPY	0.5977	0.6484	0.6523	0.6602
AL (3 Months)	1343	1345	DEM	3.4688	3.5313	3.6250	3.6512
CU (3 Months)	1650	1655	FRF	3.5000	1.8555	2.0039	2.1445
Zinc (3 Months)	1071	1075	CHF	1.7070	3.5625	3.8663	3.8320
Lead (3 Months)	550	554	ITL	6.0040	4.5580	4.6130	-
Ni (3 Months)	4180	4180					

Main Equity Indices							
Bourse	Index	Value	Chng	% Chng	High	Low	Pr Cls
NewYork	DOW JONES	8698.02	20.34	0.24	8710.02	8552.96	8577.68
NewYork	S&P 500	1089.48	-0.18	-0.02	1102.54	1084.72	1089.63
London	FT-SE 100	5980.4	86.3	1.54	5982.4	5884.4	5994.1
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	15829.17	-47.05	-0.3	16037.3	15797.3	15876.2
Paris	CAC 40	4041.88	73.29	1.85	4041.88	3968.57	3968.59
Frankfurt	DAX	5581.22	63.58	1.15	5590.08	5537.82	5517.64

Energy		
Commodity	Last	Delivery
Coffee (c/lbs)	128.57	Spot
Cocoa (\$/ton)	1886	Spot
Sugar (\$/ton)	283.5	Spot
Wheat (\$/ton)	97	Spot
Soya (c/lbs)	23.4	Spot
Tea (sl/kg)	125	Spot
Barley (\$/bsh)	0	Spot
Rice (\$/ton)	415	Spot

* JOD Cross Rates		
Currency	Buy	Sell
US Dollar	0.708	0.710
GB Sterling	1.1564	1.1622
DE Mark	0.3989	0.4009
CH Franc	0.4745	0.4789
FR Franc	0.119	0.1196
JP Yen	0.01538	0.01548
NL Guilder	0.3559	0.3579
IT Lira	0.4044	0.4054

*Source: Central Bank of Jordan

* JOD Cross Rates

Currency	Buy	Sell
US Dollar	0.708	0.710
GB Sterling	1.1664	1.1622
DE Mark	0.3989	0.4009
CH Franc	0.4745	0.4769
FR Franc	0.119	0.1196
JP Yen	0.4855	0.488
NL Guilder	0.3538	0.3556
IT Lira	0.4044	0.4064

* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

Airport Services Dubai

DNATA, a major international travel organisation and the sole ground handling agent at Dubai International Airport, wishes to recruit professionals for positions in the Ground Operations Department.

DISPATCHERS (Ref.No. D/JT)

Reporting to the Ramp Operations Superintendent, the responsibilities include co-ordinating the activities of all departments and agencies at Dubai Airport to ensure safe, punctual departures while maintaining the highest standards of customer service.

The successful candidates should have:

- Higher secondary school education or equivalent
- At least 5 years' experience in all aspects of flight handling
- Completed advanced courses in Load Control, Cargo Handling, Dangerous Goods and Passenger Services, preferably to an advanced level
- Thorough knowledge of Departure Control Systems
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Supervisory skills
- A valid driving licence.

LOADING TEAM LEADERS (Ref.No. LTL/JT)

Reporting to the Load Supervisor, the responsibilities include supervision of the aircraft loading/offloading functions for all customer airlines; distribution of manpower and equipment to the loading/offloading points to ensure safe and efficient operation

and baggage identification, screening and sequence recording before loading to ensure all security requirements are met.

The successful candidates should have:

- Senior school matriculation or equivalent
- At least 3 years' experience in a Ground Operations environment
- Fluency in written and spoken English
- Knowledge of Asian languages such as Urdu, Hindi and Persian would be an advantage
- Completed Introductory, Load Processing and Handling, Basic Cargo, Basic Load Control and Dangerous Goods Ramp courses
- Computer literacy
- A valid driving licence.

These positions are based in Dubai, one of the most cosmopolitan environments in the Middle East. We offer an attractive tax-free salary and benefits associated with the airline industry. For the position of Dispatchers only, single status accommodation will be provided.

If you are interested, please send your detailed resume along with a recent passport size photograph within 7 days, quoting the reference code of the position you are applying for to:

The Recruitment Officer,
DNATA,
P.O. Box 7054,
Dubai,
United Arab Emirates.



MEMBER OF THE
EMIRATES GROUP

THE Daily Crossword Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

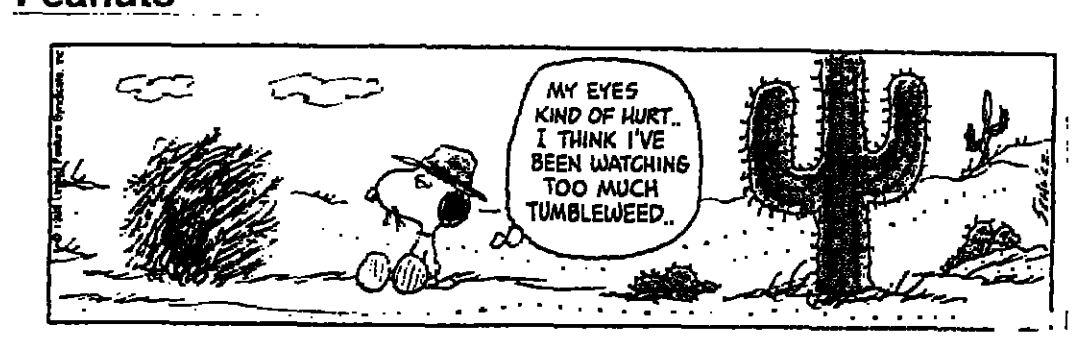
ACROSS

- Leave out
- Work gang
- Get up
- Football
- Pelt
- Lifting device
- Surfactants
- Race or Rigg
- Talking potato heads?
- Guzzle
- Broad
- panoramas
- Nebraska city
- County of SW England
- Letters on graves
- Shaddock fruit
- Phonics
- India's dress
- Foot leader?
- Egyptian goddess
- Garden vegetable
- Glossy paint
- Court divider
- "Dime Poems"
- poet
- Crosses
- Shreds, as vegetables
- Cereal grass
- Run from
- Speedy
- Restaurant serving drinks
- Fred Astaire's sister
- British princess
- Jar covers
- Earth
- Fishing gear
- Votes for

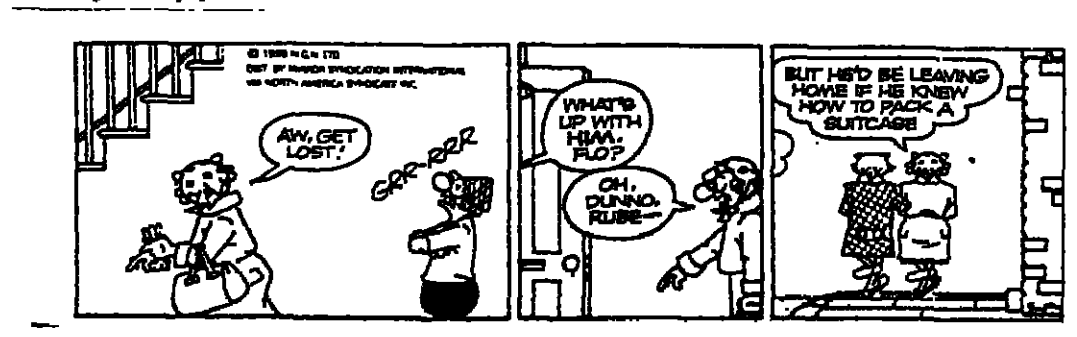
DOWN

- Fuel cartel
- abbr.
- Short note
- Menu listing
- Time in office
- Dishes
- Engaged in a violent disturbance
- Ferber or
- Compass direction
- Armstrong, and Collins
- Houdini's last name
- One of Frank's eros
- Winter Fallet
- Segment of history
- Mogadishu resident
- Unfild
- Battle injury
- Flyboys
- Sales speeches
- Making a choice
- Working cat
- Ambrosia of immortality
- Biddies
- Actor Hawke
- Sign of victory
- Run against
- Sleazebag
- Half a score
- Starts
- Transferred property
- Brief trip
- Discount buy
- briefly
- Affirmatives
- Sleazebag
- For each
- Plea's river
- Have
- New York canal
- Radames' love
- Hardy heroine
- Uncooked
- Excitement
- For each

Peanuts



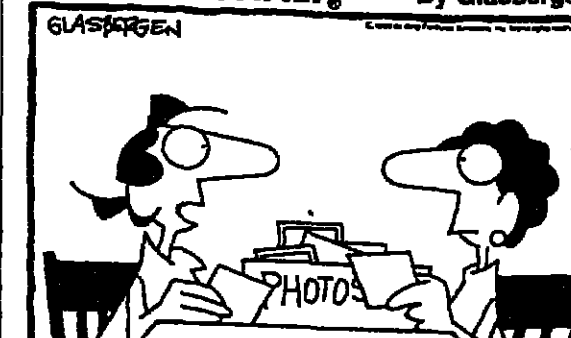
Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



"The first time Stanley kissed me, I felt the earth move. He paid his roommate to follow us around with a jackhammer."

JUMBLE

Unscramble those four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

Official Volume Words Scrabble, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

FEWAR

MASK

LEMITY

MEEGRE

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here: A

Yesterday's Answer: VOUCH CHASM TETHER CROUCH

A good thing to do when you're in over your head — SHUT YOUR MOUTH

Mineral water bottling round-the-clock

COMPANIES OPERATING mineral water bottling are working at full capacity to meet the demand for the beverage. The companies are currently trying to secure empty bottles locally within their effort to supply the market. The companies and contracts were expected to arrive this week. The companies are expected to be able to supply the market with mineral water to wholesale trade. The companies are currently trying to secure empty bottles locally within their effort to supply the market. The companies and contracts were expected to arrive this week. The companies are expected to be able to supply the market with mineral water to wholesale trade. The companies are currently trying to secure empty bottles locally within their effort to supply the market. The companies and contracts were expected to arrive this week. The companies are expected to be able to supply the market with mineral water to wholesale trade. 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Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

Mineral water bottling plants working round-the-clock at full capacity

**** COMPANIES OPERATING** mineral water bottling are working at full capacity, estimated at 500,000 cubic metres per day, and are currently striving to secure empty bottles to fill them locally within their efforts to ease the crisis of drinking water. The owners of these companies said contracts were concluded with Saudi firms to supply bottles which are expected to arrive this week.

The owners indicated that they stopped selling bottled mineral water to wholesale traders effective Thursday and concentrated on distribution centres (retailers) in an attempt to prevent stockpiling and traders' abuse of citizens' needs. They are focusing also on providing home delivery service of mineral water bottles directly from the plants which are working at full production capacity round-the-clock.

According to the owners, any amount beyond the production capacity of 500,000 cubic metres per day will affect the quality of the mineral water.

Meanwhile, a tour on commercial shops and distribution centres showed that water bottles were not available on the shelves for most of the day. As such, and to guarantee delivery to the largest possible number of areas, the companies started to specify the volume supplied to distribution centres. But still, the deliveries would run out as soon as they are unloaded at the centres.

Artesian wells at a number of areas in Amman but the industrialists and the public service office were closely watching the situation to avoid being affected by the water crisis.

The Sahab Industrial Estate depends on two sources of water supplies. The first is the Water Authority and the second is a water tower that is capable of storing 10,000 cubic metres. About 2,170 cubic metres are used of this amount every day. Some large firms own small and medium-size artesian wells that are resorted to whenever there is no water supply from the Water Authority (Al Dastour).

Miller signs agreement with Jordanian brewer to make beer in the Middle East

**** MILLER BREWING** Company said last week that it has signed an agreement with a Jordanian company to brew and sell its brand of beer in the Middle East.

Middle East International Investment Group will make the beer with licensing and technical assistance from Miller, the Milwaukee-based company said.

The investment group's brewery is being built in Amman. It will have the ability to produce both alcoholic and non-alcoholic brews, depending on the demand in the region, the announcement said.

Miller did not disclose which brands will be produced in Jordan. But Miller Genuine Draft accounts for nearly half of Miller's international business.

The agreement with the Middle East investment group will allow Miller to offer those markets a fresh product in a cost effective manner, said Richard Strup, Miller's senior vice president-international.

Israel cuts base rate amid new policy initiatives

TEL AVIV (R) — The Bank of Israel said Friday it was slashing interest rates after the treasury announced it was setting a new, low inflation target for 1999 and moderating the slope of the shekel's crawling peg.

The central bank said it was cutting its key monetary leading rate a sharp 1.5 percentage points to 9.5 per cent effective on Sunday, just 11 days after it announced a 0.3 point reduction.

The treasury, in a parallel announcement, said it was setting the inflation target for next year at 4.0 per cent, a big drop from this year's 7-10 per cent target.

It said the slope of the lower end of the Israeli currency's trading band, which moves on a crawling peg, would be moderated to 2.0 per cent from 4.0 per cent.

"The decisions that were made today both regarding the trading band and the inflation target enable us to lower interest rates without undue risk," Bank of Israel Governor Jacob Frenkel told a news conference.

Some analysts expressed concern.

"In principle this is good for the market but it could indicate a looser election-year budget," said Ilan Doron, of Solid Financial Markets. "The cuts may be too much, too soon," he added.

The treasury separately unveiled the basic outlines of its 1999 budget package. Officials said they were

preserving the targeted budget deficit for next year by offsetting an increase in the domestic deficit by an external surplus.

Both Frenkel and Neeman in separate news conferences expressed confidence that the measures would not cause a sharp weakening of the shekel thereby rekindling inflation.

"These steps taken (today) enable us to continue our battle against inflation without undue risk. They are measures that will enable the market to express itself...far more efficiently," Frenkel said.

"I see the step taken by the governor of the Bank of Israel as based on thorough

examined data and assumptions regarding the 1999 budget. Therefore, I don't see any reason for concerns in the same way I saw no reason for concerns when we undertook foreign exchange liberalisation," Neeman said.

Frenkel noted that the rate cut was made in a framework similar to the one taken in June 1997, which was done in tandem with a widening of the shekel's trading band.

The shekel depreciated in the aftermath, causing a brief uptick in inflation and the Bank of Israel to briefly raise rates slightly. But rates have been falling steadily since the start of this year, albeit more slowly

than the fall in inflation. Israeli inflation is expected to fall to about four per cent this year from 7.0 per cent in 1997, Israel's lowest rate in 28 years. As a result the real base rate is in the 7-8 per cent range.

The central bank said reducing the crawling peg was possible because of narrowing inflation differentials between Israel and the industrialised world.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he hoped the moves would spur economic growth, which fell to 1.2 per cent annual rate in the first quarter, its lowest level this decade.

"We spoke in recent days about a series of a dramatic measures. This is perhaps a

very dramatic step which we hope will push the process of growth," Netanyahu told reporters.

Critics have blamed the tight policy for Israel's sluggish growth and rising unemployment, which rose to a preliminary 9.3 per cent in May, the highest level since Netanyahu took office in June 1996.

Neeman said in a statement that the lower slope of the trading band would give investors and borrowers a better way of evaluating their foreign currency risk.

"I have no doubt that global investors will read the map and step up their investment here," Neeman said.

JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET

HOUSING BANK CENTER - AMMAN - JORDAN

TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607175

ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 08/08/1998

PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	PAST 12 MONTHS LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF SHARES	NO. OF TRADING	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE
355.800	170.000	ARAB BANK	17.9	9.1	36	2200	480150	217.50	219.00	1.50+
2.100	1.420	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	13.4	4.24	8	2922	4820	1.65	1.65	-
5.450	3.000	CHAND AMMAN BANK	9.3	3.23	2	10000	30000	3.00	3.00	-
3.230	1.130	BANK OF JORDAN	8	0.00	2	2000	2280	1.13	1.14	0.01+
1.300	0.870	MED. EAST. INV. BK.	66.3	0.00	10	20500	20990	1.04	1.01	0.03-
2.480	1.650	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	10.9	6.65	3	320	510	1.56	1.56	-
6.510	2.610	THE HOUSING BK.	19.5	3.25	21	14450	44511	3.07	3.08	0.01+
3.450	1.790	JOR. KUALITY BANK	9	0.00	7	450	852	1.86	1.86	-
4.000	1.050	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	17.5	0.00	16	5600	9580	1.70	1.71	0.01+
1.050	0.800	NET. AL-HAL (NETHA)	3.9	0.00	2	500	408	0.82	0.81	0.01-
BANK SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 290.26	%CHG: +0.58	107	59157	594408			
2.250	1.640	JOR. FRENCH INSUR.	7.6	0.23	1	1000	2710	2.70	2.71	0.01+
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 129.56	%CHG: +0.04	1	1000	2710			
2.240	1.470	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	9.9	5.39	16	6454	9927	1.54	1.53	0.01-
7.500	2.370	VEHICLES OWNERS FND.	9.3	5.31	2	1100	2486	2.37	2.26	0.11-
2.900	1.760	SHIPPING LINES	6.6	4.64	1	100	180	1.80	1.80	-
1.120	0.780	REAL ESTATE INV.	15.5	0.00	6	1950	1545	0.79	0.79	-
9.500	5.100	ALRAI	8.8	6.96	2	550	3138	5.75	5.75	-
4.600	1.850	ARAB TRVL. INV. EDUC.	9.8	2.03	2	3000	5890	1.95	1.97	0.02+
1.070	0.890	ARAB EDUCATION	21.4	0.00	3	3825	3857	1.92	1.92	-
1.830	1.270	UNIFIED CO.	5.5	8.87	16	5950	7384	1.29	1.24	0.05-
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 111.11	%CHG: -0.02	48	22929	34105			
4.000	1.640	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	11.4	5.70	20	8200	15818	1.93	1.93	-
6.500	4.800	ARAB POTASH CO.	24.1	4.08	5	25100	122990	4.90	4.90	-
11.250	9.870	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	10.3	8.25	7	1300	13897	10.70	10.65	0.05-
1.570	1.000	WOLAN INDUSTRIES	11.9	6.68	4	100	1000	1.05	1.07	0.02+
7.350	5.900	JOR. WORTED MILLS	7.9	3.33	1	100	600	6.10	6.00	0.10-
5.740	2.400	ARAB PHARM. IND.	7.4	2.79	43	23091	62203	2.74	2.69	0.05-
5.800	1.110	JOR. CHEMICAL IND.	9.5	7.87	9	1000	254	1.31	1.27	0.04-
1.440	1.020	JOR. STEEL MANUFACT.	9.1	9.09	9	10100	11131	1.11	1.10	0.01-
6.500	4.700	DAR ALMAH. DV. INV.	6.5	6.46	15	5100	27706	5.44	5.42	0.02-
2.980	1.730	ARAB ALUM. IND.	13.0	14.20	3	3250	5720	1.73	1.76	0.03+
0.870	0.400	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	1	0.00	1	200	42	0.42	0.42	-
1.100	0.670	ARAB PAPER CONV. IND.	24.7	0.00	4	10500	8586	0.81	0.81	-
0.620	0.440	NATIONAL INDUS.	9	0.00	3	6900	2948	0.44	0.42	0.02-
0.590	0.370	TELEPHONE. PERSO. COMM.	9	0.00	4	1500	580	0.38	0.39	0.01+
0.740	0.450	INTL. COMM. IND.	9.74	0.00	1	550	451	0.85	0.82	0.03-
2.330	0.790	NATL. CABLE WIRE. NET.	38.6	0.00	16	11268	9267	0.83	0.82	0.01-
0.730	0.510	JOR. WULFORD COMM.	9.7	0.00	1	250	128	0.51	0.51	-
1.470	1.150	ARAB PHARM. COMM.	14.1	4.69	17	7650	9718	1.31	1.28	0.03-
0.740	0.390	KAMPAR EXCHNG.	9	0.00	10	3800	1786	0.45	0.47	0.02+
2.300	0.730	DEV. MGMT. INDUS.	11.5	8.23	8	800	576	0.73	0.72	0.01-
1.040	0.500	JOR. INDUS. RESOURCES	9	0.00	11	8924	4907	0.55	0.55	-
1.600	1.200	NATL. CABLE CO.	8.6	8.20	12	69200	84424	1.21	1.22	0.01+
1.080	0.730	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	10.2	13.89	18	8500	6129	0.73	0.72	0.01-
1.610	1.150	EL. & T. READY WEAR	40.5	0.00	1	4000	4650	1.17	1.15	0.02-
1.310	0.990	INTL. TORACCO	6.9	5.95	1	200	196	0.99	0.98	0.01-
1.220	0.860	WELDON CR. & VEG.	9.6	0.00	2	700	609	0.87	0.87	-
0.890	0.660	JORDAN STEEL	9.7	8.33	9	6016	5193	0.66	0.67	0.01+
1.100	0.750	ARAB INT. FOOD FACT.	52.1	0.00	2	5250	4638	0.75	0.75	-
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 88.00	%CHG: -0.25	219	222995	405722			
GRAND TOTAL			INDEX: 179.52	%CHG: +0.33	375	306081	1036945			
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 08/08/1998										
4.500	0.270	CENTRAL GEN. STORAGE	9	0.00	1	6000	2820	0.45	0.47	0.02+
0.500	0.310	UNION INV.	9	0.00	4	13250	6758	0.52	0.51	0.01-
0.520	0.280	ARAB INV. INVEST.	9	0.00	7	13800	4002	0.29	0.29	-
2.220	1.050	CERTIFY INV. GROUP	9	0.00	1	500	130	1.26	1.26	-
0.430	0.240	ARAB TRVL. INV. TRD.	29.9	0.00	8	12600	3170	0.25	0.26	0.01+
0.420	0.250	NATL. CABLE CO.	9	0.00	2	8500	2036	0.23	0.23	-
0.580	0.360	NATL. MOLT. ENG. MANTCO	9	0.00	9	4900	1813	0.37	0.37	-
0.690	0.380	HIDRAT PHARM. CO.	9	0.00	3	4686	2482	0.63	0.63	-
1.750	0.950	UNION TORACCO 87.5%	10.3	7.72	3	3060	3083	1.62	1.62	-
0.740	0.470	RAT. PHARM.	9	0.00	1	400	232	0.58	0.58	-
0.350	0.220	INDUS. ENG.	9	0.00	7	11200	2468	0.23	0.23	-
0.950	0.550	ADVANCED PHARM. IND.	9	0.00	8	8700	5133	0.59	0.59	-
0.950	0.560	OPTICALS HEALING CO.	9	0.00	4	7500	2570	0.36	0.34	0.02-
0.760	0.480	NAT. ALUMINUM CO.	32.7	0.00	20	16750	10977	0.87	0.86	0.01-
1.310	0.810	WUTRARD	9	0.00	5	1271	1105	0.88	0.88	-
1.300	0.700	AL-KHAL. PRINTING CO.	10.5	10.98	16	12750	8833	0.70	0.69	0.01-
GRAND TOTAL			99	125217	58110					
MARKET SUMMARY										
New 12 months high										
New 12 months low										
Stock dividend during the past 12 months										
Listed during the past 12 months										
P/E ratio is 100 or more										
Negative P/E										
Earnings is zero or N/A for the most recent year										

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY, AUGUST 9, 1998

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You're good at learning new games, so practice one that will make your life easier. You can't afford to buy the latest equipment, so you have to do it the hard way. Well, you're gaining valuable experience. When you finally get the money together, you'll know just exactly what to buy.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You're likely to tell somebody today something you had been keeping to yourself, so you might as well plan the best way to say it. Be nice, but firm. The other person will be tolerant and understanding, and the overall result will be improved communications. Keep that in mind and you'll do just fine.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Pick up the donuts on the way to work again this morning and your boss will be in a more pleasant mood. Otherwise, you could walk straight into a brick wall. You want to do something that he or she isn't real gung-ho about. Don't force a confrontation yet.

CANCER: (June 22 to July 21) There are tough decisions to make, which need to be thought out carefully. Consult your friends and do a little more reading. The more prepared you are, the better. Don't let anybody push you into making a decision before you're good and ready.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) It'll be hard accomplish much today if you're fighting the system. Watch, listen and learn, and wait until tomorrow to launch your offensive. You could find out a valuable piece of information this morning. It has to do with money, both yours and other people's.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) If you and your mate can take off on your world cruise today, go for it. Early tomorrow morning would be even better. There could be a couple of difficulties today. You might find you forgot to pack something important, for example. Work may interfere with romance later on tonight as well.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Don't make a date for tonight. You'll lack both time and money. Save up for tomorrow. Instead, your personal life will be much easier then. Make an agreement that will allow you to get the money you need. If you don't know quite how, ask a Taurus for advice.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You're in a good mood, and so is your significant other. Do something romantic to start the day off right. It might be nothing more than sharing your favourite breakfast together. Your evening plans could get disrupted, so don't put off making that kindly gesture. You'll be glad later you did.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Your workload is heavier. There are decisions to make and that may feel confining. You'll improve your chances if you settle down a little. People want to know they can depend on you, especially those who pay your salary. So go ahead and agree to a schedule.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) There's something you want, but you don't have the money. Could you find a way to get the item for less money? Or maybe you could figure out how to get the money you need. There's a variable in there that you've overlooked, but you can find it. Get your sweetheart to help this evening.

Sampras and Agassi advance in Toronto

TORONTO (AFP) — Pete Sampras and Andre Agassi were to renew their rivalry in the quarterfinals of the Canadian Open Friday night, hours after wrapping up victories in the rain-delayed third round.

Agassi, the eighth seed, triumphed in a three-set thriller over 10th seed and Wimbledon finalist Goran Ivanisevic, 2-6, 7-5, 6-3.

The Croatian dominated the first set, but Agassi pulled level in the second with the lone service break of the set.

In the third, Agassi was looking fresher as the Croatian appeared to tire in the hot, humid conditions.

Agassi extended his current winning streak to 13 matches. He hasn't lost since his second-round exit at Wimbledon and has captured two ATP titles — in Washington and Los Angeles — in the process.

He and Sampras split their previous two meetings this year, Agassi downing Sampras to win the title in San Jose in February and Sampras prevailing in the second round of the Monte Carlo Open in April.

Sampras and Agassi are tied for the most career Super 9 titles with nine apiece and have combined to win 59 hardcourt titles.

Sampras reached the quarters with a 7-6 (7/5), 6-2 win over German teenager Tommy Haas.

The other quarterfinals pitted third seed Patrick Rafter of Australia against fifth-seeded Swede Jonas Bjorkman, fourth seed Yevgeny Kafelnikov of Russia against sixth seed Richard Krajicek of Holland and seventh seed Tim Henman of Britain against Czech Daniel Vacek, the only unseeded player left in the draw.



American Andre Agassi returns a shot to Goran Ivanisevic of Croatia in their match at the du Maurier Open in Toronto. Agassi won the match 2-6 7-5 6-3 (Reuters photo)



Australian Patrick Rafter watches the ball during his match with Mark Philippoussis of Australia at the du Maurier Open in Toronto. Rafter won the match 6-3 6-3 (Reuters photo)

Perkins swims 2nd fastest 800m

SYDNEY (AP) — Atlanta Olympic 1500-metre champion Kieren Perkins swam the second-fastest time in the world this year when he won the 800-metre event at the domestic Telstra League final Saturday.

Perkins, 26, clocked 7 minutes, 42.85 seconds, bettered only by Italy's Emiliano Brembilla at the Sydney World Cup meet in January. Perkins is set to compete in the Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur in September.

From the opening 50 metres, a small crowd at the Sydney International Aquatic Centre cheered Perkins on.

"I had a discussion with my coach John Carew before leaving Brisbane and I'm sure he would be quite happy with my split times and the overall times," Perkins said.

"I've certainly been putting in the hard yards and the training camp in Singapore certainly helped my preparation. I'm looking forward to getting away for the Games and just to see how fast I can swim."

Despite Perkins' form, it was not enough to ensure his team, the Queensland Superfish, victory in the final. After the 48-event programme, the New South Wales Institute of Sport were comfortable winners.

Earlier in the day, Perkins had to settle for second place in the 400 metres behind world champion Ian Thorpe, who swam for New South Wales.

U.S. biggest surprise in final four of World Basketball Championship

ATHENS (AP) — Yugoslavia, Russia, Greece and the United States are in the semi-finals of the World Basketball Championship — and nobody is more relieved to survive than the anonymous Americans.

European champion Yugoslavia, which plays the best basketball outside of the NBA and got silver to the Dream Team in the '96 Olympics, was supposed to make it. They did, 70-62 winners Friday over Argentina.

Russia, silver medalists in the '94 worlds, was almost as good a bet as the most experienced, physical team in the tournament. They beat neighbouring Lithuania 82-67.

Greece, the home team trying to match its last major basketball medal — a gold 11 years ago in the European championship — was rooted to a 69-62 victory over Spain by a boisterous 18,000 sellout at Olympic arena.

The Americans? The no-name composite drafted when the NBA players were locked out, won 80-77 when Italy's Carlton Myers missed a 3-pointer with seven seconds left. The English-born Italian finished with a tournament-high 32.

Russia was to face the United States Saturday with Greece playing bitter Balkan rival Yugoslavia looking for its first win against them since 1987.

"There's all the expectation on us since we got here," said center Gerard King, who had nine points. "Some people said we wouldn't get there. It's a sigh of relief, but we're not quite there yet."

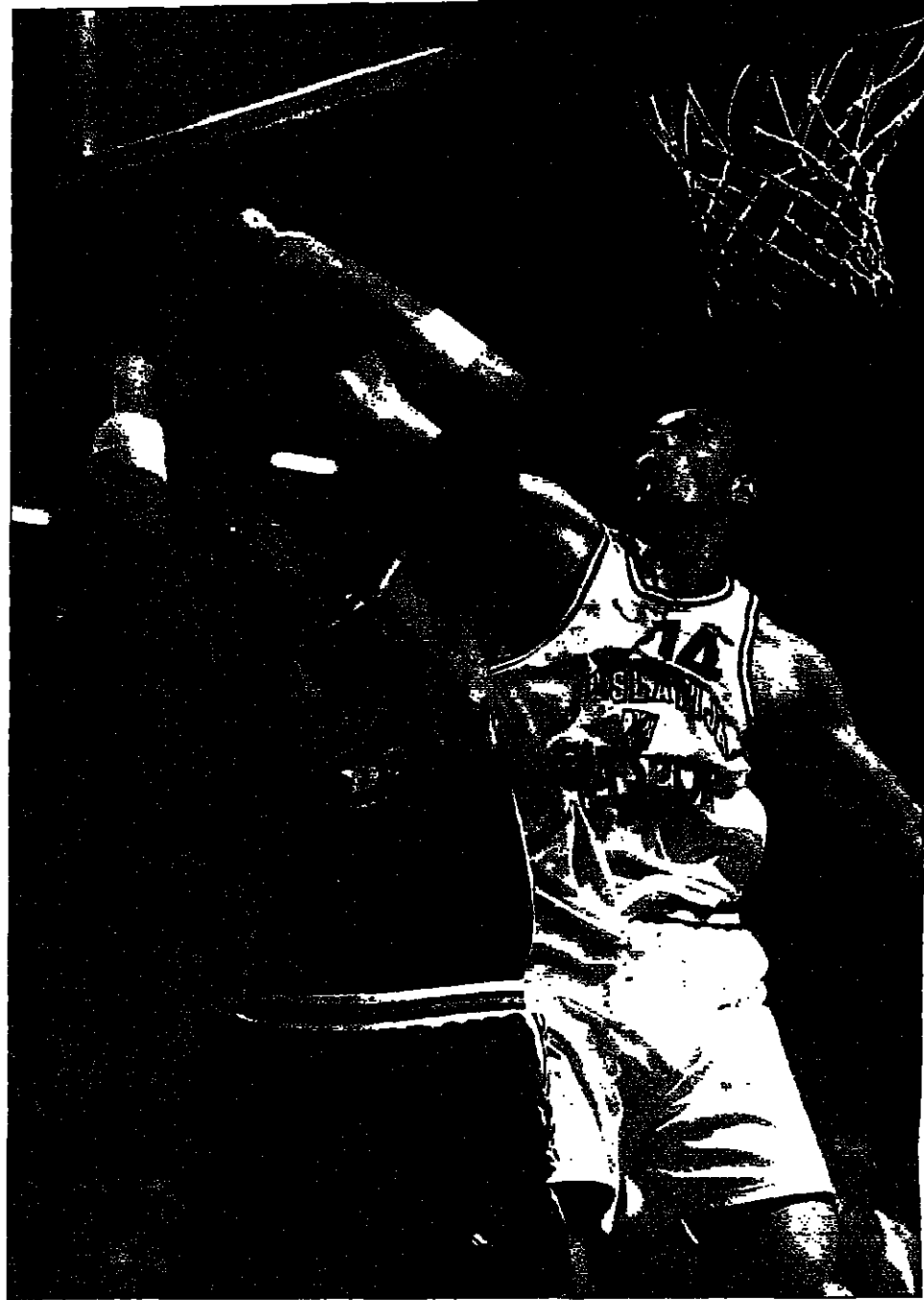
Michael Hawkins topped the U.S. with 16 with 14 from Wendell Alexis and 11 from Kiwane Garris.

"There's a kind of sense of relief," said Garris. "Back home people are talking that we're not going to do this, not going to do that. Now we've got to take advantage and go for the gold and not just settle for a medal."

The Americans trailed by seven with just under five minutes to play and looked like they'd become the first U.S. team to finish without a medal in the world since 1978. But Garris hit a 3-pointer, a closer shot from the wing and knocked down three key free throws to help secure the victory.

"A lot of teams get down like we were and it's like a dam breaking," Tomjanovich said. "But these guys stuck with it against a very tough opponent. They (Italy) probably deserved to win it. There's something special about this group of guys."

Yugoslavia, without more top-line talent than anyone but the U.S., is still the favorite to win it all.



Argentinian center Ruben Wolkowicz struggles a rebound with Yugoslav forward Dejan Tomasevic (R) during the third quarter final of the World Basketball Championship in Athens' Olympic Stadium. Yugoslavia beat Argentina 70-62 and qualified for the semi-finals (Reuters photo)

Sunday and match its 1990 world title. The all-purpose 2.06 (6.9) Dejan Bodiroga had 14, one of five in double figures. Juan Alberto Espil led Argentina with 18.

STANDINGS

Group E					
Team	W	L	PF	PA	Pts
q-Yugoslavia	5	1	486	366	12
q-Russia	5	1	455	388	12
q-Italy	4	2	395	393	10
q-Greece	4	2	385	379	10
Puerto Rico	2	4	438	443	8
Canada	1	5	419	484	7

Group F					
Team	W	L	PF	PA	Pts
q-United States	5	1	511	430	11
q-Spain	5	1	457	429	11
q-Lithuania	4	2	472	432	10
q-Australia	3	3	436	428	9
Australia	3	3	432	427	9
Brazil	1	5	399	456	7

QUARTERFINALS

Russia	82	Lithuania	67
United States	80	Italy	77
Yugoslavia	70	Argentina	62
Greece	69	Spain	62
Consolation Round			
Brazil	76	Puerto Rico	64
Australia	88	Canada	71

Saturday, Aug. 8

11th Place	
Puerto Rico vs. Canada, 0700	
9th Place	
Brazil vs. Australia, 0900	
Consolation Round	
Match A	
Argentina vs. Spain, 1115	
Match B	
Italy vs. Lithuania, 1330	
Semifinals	
Yugoslavia vs. Greece, 1545	
Russia vs. United States, 1800	
Sunday, Aug. 9	
Seventh Place	
Loser Match A vs. Loser Match B, 1015	
Fifth Place	
Winner Match A vs. Winner Match B, 1230	
Third Place	
Semifinal losers, 1445	
Championship	
Semifinal winners, 1700	

Feerick sets hearing for grievance on guaranteed NBA contracts

NEW YORK (AP) — Barring an unforeseen resumption of talks, the next big event in the North American National Basketball Association lockout will come late this month when arbitrator John Feerick holds a hearing on whether players with guaranteed contracts should be paid during the lockout.

Feerick met Friday with lawyers from the league and the union and set Aug. 24-25 as the dates for the hearing.

If the players were to win, the owners would be obligated to pay about \$800 million in guaranteed salaries during the 1998-99 season. First, however, owners would undoubtedly ask that any award be delayed until the issue of Feerick's jurisdiction was settled in federal court.

Formal talks between the sides broke off Thursday afternoon when commissioner David Stern and six owners walked out of a bargaining session after hearing the players' new proposal.

Stern and deputy commissioner Russ Granik said the union's strategy appeared to be geared toward trying to defeat the

owners in two matters of litigation before Feerick and the National Labor Relations Board.

The union filed the grievance with Feerick on June 30, just a few hours before the lockout commenced, claiming the owners committed an "anticipatory breach of contract" when they announced June 29 that they would not pay players with guaranteed contracts during the lockout.

Most players aren't scheduled to receive their first

paychecks until Nov. 15, but a few dozen were supposed to be paid this summer.

Feerick held a hearing last week and determined that he has jurisdiction to hear the grievance. League lawyers did not attend that hearing after going to court earlier that day and failing to convince a federal judge to issue a temporary restraining order halting it. The league is thought to be weary of Feerick, who was publicly castigated by Stern after his ruling last March in the Latrell Sprewell case.

Stern's lawyers were supposed to attend a scheduling session with Feerick on Thursday afternoon, but refused to show up after the talks broke down.

By Friday morning, they had relented.

The next date to watch in the NLRB case is Aug. 10, when regional director Daniel Silverman will determine whether the players' complaint has merit. The union filed an unfair labor practice charge with the NLRB, claiming the league unlawfully altered the terms of the expired agreement before an impasse in negotiations had been reached.

TODAY AT

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PHILADELPHIA '2'

Comedian Adel Imam...in

AL ZA'EEM

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30
Additional shows Thursday and Friday evenings at 12:30

PLAZA

Comedian Adel Imam...in

AL ZA'EEM

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30
Additional shows Thursday and Friday evenings at 12:30

CONCORD

CONCORD '1' Adel Imam & Yusra...in

LETTER TO THE GOVERNOR

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30
DUMB & DUMBER Shows: 3:30 only

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ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria

Comedian Adel Imam...in

AL ZA'EEM

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30
Additional shows Thursday and Friday evenings at 12:30

GALLERIA 2

ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria

Comedian Adel Imam...in

AL ZA'EEM

Shows: 1:30, 4:30, 7:30, 10:30
Additional shows Thursday and Friday evenings at 12:30

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make their roll

Seles survives as quarters take their toll

SAN DIEGO (AFP) — Monica Seles overcame Ai Sugiyama 6-4, 6-3 to reach the semi-finals of the WTA Tour event here Friday, then announced that she may not be able to play Lindsay Davenport for a place in the final.

Suffering from a sore back, Seles was not the only player to have fitness problems on Friday. Third seed Venus Williams was forced to retire against Mary Pierce with a knee injury and Pierce — who also received treatment — advanced 2-6, 7-6 (7/5), 4-0.

Second seed Davenport was still standing at the end of the day after beating eighth seeded Nathalie Tauziat of France 6-4, 6-3.

Third seeded Seles hurt her back while supporting her team-mates at the Fed Cup, which the United States lost 3-2 after Spain won a marathon doubles to decide the tie.

Sitting on a bench through two long matches, she then flew for 18 hours from Madrid through London to San Francisco.

"We were on a bench that didn't have any support on the back at all and I was there for about eight hours," Seles explained. "I could hardly walk, and then I started playing with it (in Stanford) and that didn't help. It spasms up so much, but there's no injury. It's not a pulled muscle."

"It's very stiff right now, the whole back," she added. "I can't bend down at all once I stiffen up. The doctor said I need to take some time off without playing. I'm just going to play this week by ear. We'll see. I've never had a back problem before so I don't know what to expect."



Venus Williams, of the United States, hits a backhand during her 2-6 7-6 4-0 (retired) loss to Mary Pierce of France at the Corel WTA Toshiba Tennis Classic. Williams retired due to a nagging knee injury (Reuters photo)

Seles' victory revolved around the final game of the first set, in which Sugiyama committed three successive double-faults and then netted a forehand to give Seles the only break. Seles then won eight of the first nine points of the second set.

"At 4-5 the sun moved to right where I tossed the ball, and I tried to toss from a different place but it didn't work well," said Sugiyama. "I couldn't get the rhythm, and I didn't get my rhythm at the beginning of the second set either. I felt pretty good at the end of the set, but it was too late."

Williams was evasive about the injury to her left knee that forced her to retire after receiving treatment during four successive changeovers. First she said it was not related to an

injury suffered in last Sunday's Stanford final which she lost to Davenport. Then she said it was.

"It's patella tendinitis and I did it around 4-4 in the second set," said Williams, who might still play doubles with sister Serena next week in Los Angeles. "I thought I could still win the match but I found I was living in a false reality and I quit."

Despite the treatments and the fact Williams was obviously having difficulty in moving, Pierce claimed she was surprised when her opponent quit.

"She was able to run down some great balls, and I've seen matches where she's taped up or cramping and she came through and won, so I didn't think she was going to stop," said

Pierce. Incredibly, Pierce also considered quitting after receiving treatment to her racket hand in the first set.

"Sometimes a cartilage or something gets stuck and I have trouble gripping, and the trainer moved it around and loosened it up and taped it," said Pierce. "That helped, but I was close to stopping at one point. It's so funny. It shows that anything can happen in tennis. One minute my hand is hurting, and the next she's in trouble."

Davenport recovered from 0-3 in both sets to avenge her Wimbledon defeat by Tauziat, showing impressive speed and striking a succession of fine forehand winners to combat Tauziat's serve and volley tactics.

Wihdat elections set for Aug. 14

Construction of football stadium among foremost issues

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Members of one of the Kingdom's largest sports clubs, Al Wihdat, will this month elect their board of directors which will run the club for the upcoming two years, club sources said Friday.

Wihdat spokesman Khader Sowwan, also running for elections, explained that two major blocs were running for the August 14 ballot. His bloc, headed by Riyadh Abdul Kareem, and another headed by former chairman Fahd Bayari.

Wihdat's current chairman Bahjat Shihab cannot run for elections this time because he presided over the club's chairmanship for the past four years.

Among the issues dominating the campaigns of the two blocs is the construction of a football ground, opening the door for more members to join the club which has dominated most of the country's soccer competitions in the past four years.

Club insiders told the Jordan Times

that among the issues of Bayari's "green bloc", is adding more sports to the club's list, including handball and volleyball.

"The introduction of professionalism in the country is among the issues which we call for," said Abdul Rahman Najjar, a member of Bayari's bloc.

"The present administration failed to build the football ground despite the fact that they managed to raise the money for that purpose," he said.

"The municipality of Greater Amman has donated a plot of land, but no reason was given by the administration as to the delay of the construction," he added.

Najjar said that his bloc held a meeting with Minister of Culture and Youth Mohammad Sata'an Hassan this week and urged him to ensure "fair and honest" elections.

"The meeting discussed the mechanism to ensure fair elections," Najjar said. He did not elaborate.

In addition to Bayari and Abdul Kareem, three other members are contesting the chairmanship, which

includes Mohammad Salameh, Mahmoud Kouz and Adli Kouz.

"They will contest the elections as independents. I believe that they have a slim chance," said one source, who requested anonymity.

The elections, which were scheduled to take place last week were postponed for lack of quorum.

Sowwan described the absence of most members was something "normal which happens every elections since most believe that the majority will not attend so they decline to show up."

"But elections will be held whether or not the majority attend on August 14," Sowwan added.

Al Wihdat currently lead the Premier League Championship and are looking for their 5th consecutive title. This year they won the first of the season's titles when they won the season-opening and their fourth Cup Winners' Cup. They lost the Jordan Cup final to Al Faisali Friday.

Broncos start exhibition season minus Elway

DENVER (AP) — Call the Denver Broncos' opening exhibition in St. Louis Saturday night a rehearsal for the future.

While the defending Super Bowl champions meet the St. Louis Rams, John Elway, who is expected to retire after the season, will be in Rochester, Minnesota.

His wife Janet underwent surgery Thursday for what is believed to be Crohn's Disease, a chronic disease of the intestinal tract.

So Bubby Brister will start at quarterback for the Broncos, with Brian Griese, who may be Elway's eventual replacement, ready to get his first action as a pro.

It's been a strange camp for the Broncos. Last week, on the way back from visiting his wife, Elway stopped at a motorcycle rally in Sturgis, South Dakota, in an attempt to coax left tackle Gary Zimmerman out of retirement for the second straight year. Chances are Zimmerman will be back, although coach Mike Shanahan isn't sure yet.

"There are a lot of details," Shanahan said. "There isn't even a contract yet."

This is the first full weekend of NFL exhibitions — the start of the season is only four weeks away.

On Thursday night, the New

York Jets beat Philadelphia 29-15.

On Friday night, Detroit beat Arizona 13-10 on Jason Hanson's 38-yard field goal 2:50 into overtime. Hanson's 34-yarder with one second left in regulation forced overtime.

Also, Tennessee defeated Atlanta 31-16. George McCullough returned an interception for a touchdown, and James Ritchey and Ron Powles, battling for a backup spot at quarterback, each threw a touchdown pass for the Oilers.

On Saturday, the Baltimore Ravens open their new stadium against the Chicago Bears.

In other Saturday games, Buffalo is at Pittsburgh, Jacksonville at Carolina, Miami at Washington, Kansas City vs. Tampa Bay at Norman, Okla., Cincinnati at the New York Giants, New Orleans at Green Bay, Oakland at Dallas,

Indianapolis at Seattle, and San Francisco at San Diego. Minnesota is at New England Sunday.

Griese isn't the only rookie quarterback in the spotlight. Peyton Manning, the No. 1 overall pick in the draft, will start for the Colts at Seattle, and Ryan Leaf, the No. 2 overall pick, will start for the Chargers at San Francisco.

"I didn't leave college early so I could sit on the bench for a year," Leaf said after his first practice as a starter.

"This is what I wanted to do," Manning stepped right in after a five-day holdout and shined in workouts against the Rams.

He said he's been told he will play the first half Saturday night.

"I don't know whether that will alter during the three games after that," he said. "Whatever time I'm in there, I'm going to try to make the

best out of it."

Manning, whose only competitors are two inexperienced journeymen, Kelly Holcomb and Bill Musgrave, was chosen the starting quarterback for the Colts shortly after being drafted.

He'll be going against Tony Banks, a third-year starter whom coach Dick Vermeil hopes will become a solid NFL quarterback this year.

"I'd just like to see him show good command, good rhythm in the offense, good leadership and good percentage," Vermeil said. "I'd like to see him throw 60 percent or better complete and I'd like to see him throw about 70 percent complete on first downs."

Two years after leaving Cleveland for Baltimore, the Ravens open their new \$220 million stadium. A sellout crowd of 69,000, a rarity for an exhibition, is expected.



Monica Seles follows through on a swing during her match against Ai Sugiyama at the Corel WTA Toshiba Tennis Classic at the La Costa Resort and Spa in Carlsbad, California. Seles won 6-4 6-3 (Reuters photo)

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Identifying physical storage areas and defining logical mappings to the areas. Creating database on logical devices and assigning ownership to database. Managing system configuration settings, including the amount of server memory and how it is allocated, the number of concurrent user connections and the number of locks and systems devices. Performing server startup and shutdown, including a well defined regimen of preventive maintenance for all fails. Providing advice on Sybase training to all UNIX and Sybase support staff Agency-wide.
ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS:
Applicants must have 1) University degree in Computer Science, Electrical or Computer Engineering including Technical training in UNIX, Sybase, TCP/IP, Data telecommunications and personal computers. 2) Six year's technical information systems experience in a UNIX/Sybase environment, including some experience in advising, assisting and supporting technical and non-technical users of information systems. 3) Experience in Novell Local Area Network operating systems and programming in C Language. 4) Knowledge of spoken and written Arabic. 5) Lotus Notes Systems Administration experience. 6) Fluency in spoken and written English. Qualified candidates may be invited for tests and interviews.
REMUNERATION:
The post is graded at level 16 and carries a monthly Base Salary starting from \$1,064.10, plus a Managerial Allowance amounting to 15% of Base Salary.
APPLICATIONS:
For applicants selected from outside Gaza, a Special Expatriate Allowance will be payable. Applications quoting AVN number may be sent by mail or fax before 31 August 1998 to:
Recruitment Officer, UNRWA HQ Gaza City, P.O. Box 371, Gaza City. Fax No. +972 7 6777 555, or Personnel Officer, Headquarters Amman, Blader Wadi Seer, Fax No. 5826171 or by hand, from where additional information can be requested.

HUNTER مراوح السقف الشهيرة
مواصفات وتصميم أمريكي
مع او بدون لمبات إنارة
خمس شفرات
ماتور قوي وهدوء تام
سرعات للمروحة
كفالة لمدة سنتين
قاعدة نحاسية
شارع الملك حسين ٤٦٩٩٢٢٣
شارع مكة المكرمة ٥٥٢٢٦٨٣
شركة معشر اخوان

The National Music Conservatory/Noor Al Hussein Foundation presents
August 1998 Activities
Saturday, 15 August 1998 - 8:00 p.m.
The Royal Cultural Center- Main Theatre, JD 5
Nadine Balbeisi, soprano
Mohammad Othman Sidiq, piano
The program features songs and arias set to music by Purcell, Schumann, Faure, Mozart and Agnes Bashir.
Tuesday, 18 August 1998 - 8:00 p.m.
The Royal Cultural Center - Main Theatre, JD 7
AN EVENING OF TRADITIONAL INDIAN DANCE AND MUSIC
featuring
The superb Kathak dancer Prerana Shrimali
and Sitar soloist Deepak Choudhury
accompanied by
tabla, tanpura, flute, sarangi and vocals
In cooperation with the Embassy of India
Tickets available at:
- Alkhila-Abela Superstore, tel. 5688481 - Alisar Flowers, tel. 5527695 - Babiche, tel. 5661322
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Addressing his nation:

Saddam predicts 'bitter defeat' for West

BAGHDAD (AFP) — In a fiery speech marking the 10th anniversary of his victory in the war with Iran, President Saddam Hussein predicted Saturday that Iraq would also triumph over the West in its latest confrontation.

"Will triumphed over might" in the 1980-88 war with Iran, President Hussein said, and again in the "Mother of all Battles," as Iraq calls the 1991 Gulf war over its seven-month occupation of Kuwait.

"The Americans and their allies underestimated Iraq's ability to resist brute force and that's why they failed," said President Hussein, whose country has been crippled by eight years of sanctions imposed after the 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

"Fooled by their own power, those who attacked Iraq and imposed on it an unjust embargo... continue to make the same mistake," he said.

"Their harvest will be full of thorns, and they will taste bitter defeat in their mouths and feel it in their wicked and aggressive souls," he said.

President Hussein's speech comes only days after he once again defied the U.N. Security Council by declaring a halt to Iraqi cooperation with U.N. weapons inspectors although he made no direct reference to the deadlock.

But an official Iraqi newspaper said the U.N. inspectors should be brought to justice as spies and saboteurs.

"We have unmasked them, and the Iraqis now call for their immunity to be lifted and for them to be dealt with as foreigners engaged in spying and sabotage," said Al Iraq.

The Iraqi leadership warned Wednesday that all intrusive inspections by the weapons experts would be frozen following the collapse of talks on Monday

between U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) Chairman Richard Butler and Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz.

The U.N. Security Council has described the Iraqi decision as "totally unacceptable" but stopped short of warning of military action.

In what seemed to be a softening of the Security Council stance, a council member said Friday that Iraq's decision did not technically violate U.N. resolutions because the threat to cease cooperation had "not yet led to any action."

U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan suggested Thursday that the 15-member council should evaluate Iraqi compliance with Security Council resolutions thus far, recognise progress in a number of areas and examine ways forward.

The council should bear in mind "the ultimate objec-

tive of the exercise, which is to ensure that Iraq is effectively disarmed, and that the Iraqi people are enabled to take their place amongst the community of nations, free of sanctions," Mr. Annan said.

Mr. Butler has decided not to carry out any surprise inspections during the latest stand-off and four teams of inspectors went out to make their normal rounds Saturday morning, allowed to proceed by Iraq in what it called "a sign of good faith."

Meanwhile, President Hussein dedicated much of his speech to Iran, saying he hoped Iranian leaders had "gotten over their illusion of power," and renewing his offer to normalise relations with the Islamic republic.

"Iran will get help from Iraq and all Arabs if some of their leaders abandon the illusions of the past Arabs, and the Iraqis with them, call on the people of Iran

not to use foreign elements to harm Arabs and especially Iraq," he said.

"Each year we commemorate this anniversary for our future generations and for those of Iran also. Our hope is to see the end of hostility and fanaticism, and that hate will be replaced with love and understanding," he said.

The war between the two nations from 1980-1988 claimed hundreds of thousands of lives in each country.

President Hussein added that "geography and history... make Iraq the only country capable of profoundly understanding Iran."

Iraq shelters the main armed Iranian opposition group, the People's Mujahadeen, which on Saturday blamed the Tehran regime for a bomb Friday that killed three Iraqis, including a four-year-old girl, and injured 13 others.

Saddam hopes Iran has given up its 'illusion of power'

PRESIDENT SADDAM Hussein marked the 10th anniversary of the ceasefire in the eight-year war between Iraq and Iran with a speech saying he hoped Iranian leaders had given up their "illusion of power."

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"Fooled by their own power, those who attacked Iraq and imposed on it an unjust embargo... continue to make the same mistake," President Hussein said.

"Their harvest will be full of thorns, and they will taste bitter defeat in their mouths and feel it in their wicked and aggressive souls," he added.

He made no reference to Iraq's latest stand off with U.N. weapons inspectors.



JERASH '98 CLOSES: A dancer from the Nazareth-based Mawal troupe gestures during their performance 'The Home Operetta' Friday. The operetta written by famed Palestinian poet Samih Qassem won the applause of the audience with their swift movements on the theatre combining modern and traditional dance moves. Meanwhile, the Jerash '98 flame was put out yesterday at the Conclusion of the festival in a late night ceremony following Saudi Arabian star Abdul Majid Abdullah's final performance. Abdullah packed the Southern Amphitheatre for three consecutive nights and attracted to the ancient city an unprecedented audience this year (Photo by Yousef 'Allan)

Experts: Bombed American embassies were vulnerable

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The United States embassies in Kenya and Tanzania that were bombed Friday were among the least secure of all U.S. foreign legations, experts here said.

The two simultaneous bomb attacks in Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam killed at least 80 people and injured hundreds. The U.S. State Department quickly put its embassies around the world on a high level of alert.

Experts here agreed that the two East African embassies were easy targets because they were among the least secure of the 260 U.S. embassies and consulates around the world.

Neither building met U.S. security standards set after a car bomb explosion ripped through the U.S. embassy in Beirut in 1983, killing 240 soldiers and diplomats.

The two African embassies were built before 1980 and security had not been upgraded, said Under Secretary of State Thomas Pickering. "We have a set of standards which we believe deal with most of the difficulties," Mr. Pickering said Friday. "It is clear that these two buildings would not meet our current security standards."

The U.S. Congress reacted to the 1983 Beirut attack by allocating \$5 billion for embassy security upgrades.

However, the bulk of that money went to U.S. embassies in dangerous locations in the Middle East and Latin America, said former Under Secretary of State Ronald Spies.

Embassies in Africa have spent years "at the bottom of the list" waiting for security improvements, Mr. Spies said.

The U.S. embassy in Kenya, for example, was located in downtown Nairobi. Modern U.S. embassies are all located in more remote locations, and have plenty of space between the fortified walls and the main building.

The Dar Es Salaam embassy was located in a suburban area, which was less congested and consequently there were less casualties, experts noted.

Both the Kenya and Tanzania embassies had less security than U.S. embassies in other African capitals such as Lagos and Harare, said Joel Barkan, a political scientist at the University of Iowa.

Embassy buildings, however, cannot be just fortified bunkers, commentators said. The buildings also house cultural events, and welcome people seeking visas to visit or migrate to the United States. They are also the most visible physical U.S. presence abroad.

In the 1980s many U.S. embassies were built specifically "to demonstrate architectural talent," said retired Admiral Bobby human, who chaired a 1985 State Department commission on embassy security.

Unfortunately these buildings were "absolutely vulnerable to terrorist attacks," he said.

Adm. human's commission concluded that 126 U.S. government buildings in foreign coun-

tries could be easy terrorist targets. His draconian security recommendations, however, were criticised because it gave the undiplomatic impression that U.S. diplomats were retreating into a fortress because they feared and mistrusted the locals.

U.S. officials considered the East African region relatively safe. The United States has good relations with both Kenya and Tanzania, and neither has any known violent anti-U.S. movement.

There had not been a bombing in Nairobi since December 1980, when an alleged pro-Palestinian sympathiser bombed a Jewish-owned downtown hotel owners, killed 15 and wounded 80, experts said.

However, in retrospect Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam are ideally situated for terrorist planners to move freely and quickly, analysts said.

The two cities "are the crossroads of the West and the Middle East," said Michael Chege, the Kenyan director of the African Studies Centre at the University of Florida at Gainesville. They are "just three or four hours by air to Tehran, Baghdad, or Saudi Arabia."

"Kenya and Tanzania are the soft underbelly of Western influence in the region, and that makes them very, very vulnerable," he added.

U.S. experts here overwhelmingly believe that foreigners, not locals, were behind the attacks.



Woman gives birth to another heavyweight

COPENHAGEN (AFP) — Danish mother Anne Marie Lindballe, has given birth to a baby girl weighing 6.675 kilograms, the regional Danish television channel TV-Midt-Vest reported Friday. The woman, who lives in the village of Thyholm in western Denmark, beat the national record she already held for the heaviest birth. The new baby was 85 grammes heavier than her brother born two years ago.

Douglas to protect his name

NEW YORK (R) — Michael Douglas is teed off about a lawsuit blaming him for injuring a caddy's testicles in a golfing accident, and the actor said he would take legal action to protect his name. Douglas issued a statement denying allegations in a multimillion-dollar lawsuit filed in Manhattan federal court accusing the actor of striking the ball without yelling "Fore!" and before the caddy was in a safe location. He also denied he had made a racial slur about the black caddy.

Mum with most children dies

SANTIAGO (R) — Chilean woman who once held the world record for having the most children has died, local television reported. Leontina Espinosa, who once appeared in the Guinness Book of World Records as the woman with the most children, died of an ulcer. She had 57 children and 100 grandchildren, television reported, among them a number of sets of triplets and twins.

Finding the monster

STOCKHOLM (R) — An international team of monster-seeking specialists is to explore the Great Lake at Osternsund in central Sweden later this month to try to solve a centuries-old mystery. A fleet of 16 boats will set off on August 16 equipped with state-of-the-art sonar equipment to try to track a horse-like creature that has been reportedly spotted on 150 occasions by 450 people since 1635.

Mother sells her daughter

TOKYO (R) — Japanese police arrested a woman for selling her 16-year-old daughter to a geisha house so she could get money to play pachinko (pinball game), police said. Keiko Ueno, 46, took her daughter to a geisha house in northwest Japan and borrowed \$6,800 from them in exchange for having her daughter work there as a geisha, a spokesman for the Shizuoka prefectural police said.

Saved after six weeks adrift in a boat

SYDNEY (R) — A Papua New Guinea man who spent six weeks adrift in a small boat without food has been rescued by a passing tanker whose crew thought he was a survivor of tsunamis that devastated the country's northwest coast in July. The 35-year-old man was picked up by the MV Boral Gas in the Bismarck Sea Tuesday 14 nautical miles off West Sepik province near Wewak, about 1,000 kilometres west of his home.

Turkey appeals to EU over human rights

ANKARA (R) — Human Rights Minister Hikmet Sami Turk urged the European Union (EU) on Friday not to block Turkey's membership because of human rights concerns.

"We do not want the human rights issue to be used as a pretext to prevent our membership," he told Reuters in an interview.

Turkey, struggling to join the European club since the 1960s, was excluded from a list of prospective members in December when the EU put its membership bid on hold citing the country's shaky rights record high among its concerns.

The Turkish government responded by cutting dialogue with the EU over sensitive issues, including human rights.

The minister said Turkey would improve its rights record for its own benefit and not because of EU pressure.

"Progressing in the human rights field is a matter of honour for Turkey," he said.

Allegations of rifle abuse, including torture in police custody and extrajudicial killings have long troubled Turkey's relations with Europe.

The imprisonment of politicians, journalists and dissident activists for what they have said or written have added to those woes.

The country's main rights campaigner, Akin Birdal, shot and severely wounded by right-wing gunmen in May, was sentenced to one year in jail last month for provoking hatred in a speech. He is currently appealing the verdict.

"I do not deny that we have problems but we are in the process of more democratisation. This is a process which cannot be ended in one day," Mr. Turk said.

But Mr. Turk said when it came to the threat posed by Kurdish separatism and Islamists there were limits to what concessions could be made to improve the country's rights record.

"There are two important

dangers in Turkey. One of them is a terrorist movement against our country's territorial integrity and the second one is a fundamentalist movement which aims to change the secular character of Turkey. Both must be prevented." The European court of human rights has found Turkey guilty in several cases of ill-treatment of civilians caught in the crossfire of its conflict with Kurdish separatist rebels, fighting for self-rule since 1984.

Rights lawyers say most of the cases relate to complaints of torture, mystery killings and missing persons.

A court in January banned the country's biggest party, the Islam-based Welfare Party and barred its leader, former Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan from politics for five years, further adding to Western concerns.

A secularist clamp down has followed with a plethora of prosecutions against prominent Islamists and a clamp down on Islamic attire

in universities.

Mr. Turk said he supported the measures: "It has a connection with the country's secular character," he said.

Despite a parliamentary decision to take the country to early polls next April, the minister pledged to push through legal measures to ease tight restrictions on freedom of expression.

He said new draft laws aimed to cut the jail terms for separatist propaganda and inciting hatred from the present maximum of six years to two years.

But Conservative Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz announced he would resign at the end of the year to make way for a pre-election government, a plan that leaves only a few months for the government to pass the bills through parliament.

"I am hopeful that we will push these bills through parliament. But this is not only our problem. I hope the new government also will work in that way," Mr. Turk said.

Costly Sudan air drops meet trouble from government and rebels

By Louis Meisler
The Associated Press

MAPER — Hundreds of hungry women, some clutching babies, clustered by a water pump under the scorching sun of the African savannah, waiting for a U.N. food handout that is one of the few hopes for survival.

Their wait ended in terror. Gunmen in the distance fired off about a dozen shots, sending the women and aid workers fleeing in panic, abandoning 60 tonnes of begged corn just dropped from a Hercules cargo plane.

It was weeks before the area was safe enough for U.N. personnel to return to Maper, a vil-

lage in southern Sudan. All they found recently were a few rotting corpses draped across the charred remains of 50-kilogramme sacks of corn.

Food is a key weapon in Sudan's devastating 15-year civil war, and stories of armed bands forcing hungry civilians to abandon food deliveries are common.

The destruction of the corn at Maper, which could have fed 1,800 families for almost a month, is particularly worrisome amid reports that 350,000 people are facing starvation in southern Sudan and that at least one million more desperately go hungry.

For almost 30 years, U.N. agencies have been delivering food to Sudan's hungry.

This year, the mission is bat-

tling the same factors that keep turning droughts into killer famines: marauding bands that burn crops and food shipments, fighting that has displaced millions, and a government that sees aid as a weapon.

"In the short-term, you are saving lives, you are building something," said Claude Jibidar, field coordinator for the U.N.

World Food Programme (WFP) in southern Sudan. "But at the end of the day, we fear it is destroyed." The mission is also hugely expensive, blaming the impact of the \$225 million that donor states have spent during the past six years to send food through the United Nations to Sudan's hungry.

In some of its aid to Sudan, the

WFP is delivering only 11 1/2 cents worth of food for each dollar spent. Much of the remaining money is spent on aircraft for food delivery flights to areas too remote for road transport.

The frustration that millions of dollars spent on aid is being swept away in the chaos of war is not just limited to Sudan.

The WFP has been delivering food to victims of fighting in Afghanistan since 1980 and to Angola for about eight years, with little end in sight to either mission. Frustration over wasted aid is clearly felt by donor nations.

Last year, the United Nations received only 40 per cent of the \$120 million it felt was needed for relief in southern Sudan. That

was even lower than the 65 per cent overall response rate for the \$1.5 billion it had sought for 11 U.N. relief missions worldwide.

Foreign governments are responding to the Sudan emergency this year, but both donors and aid workers would like to see the aid money go to real development unhindered by war.

"Relief food... is only a temporary measure," said Dan Elie of Norwegian People's Aid, a relief group active in southern Sudan. Without a political solution "you might as well pour the money down the Nile." The village of Maper, where the gunshots led to the abandoned food shipment, points up all the troubles and frustrations to delivering aid in

Sudan.

The WFP must fly food into the region because of a lack of roads. Maper is about 800 kilometres south of Sudan's capital, Khartoum, and a two-hour flight from the agency's base at Lokichokio, Kenya, just across the border with Sudan.

Maper is also in Bahr Al Ghazal province, which is at the centre of Sudan's civil war and one of the areas hit hardest by famine — where relief workers charge that food aid has been manipulated by both the government and the rebels.

The province is home to soldiers and leaders of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). It has been battling a national government dominated

by northern Arabs seeking more autonomy for black southerners, who are mostly Christians or members of tribal faiths.

The day before the shooting at Maper, WFP workers had helped distribute food to 1,800 women in a field across from the UNICEF water pump and thatched huts at the centre of the village.

Nearby, a few children in the remains of a burned mud-brick hut separated small pebbles from yellow kernels of corn that had spilled from sacks that had been delivered there. Several SPLA militiamen in mismatched uniforms — some barefoot — rested under trees.

Civilian wounded in SL

TYRE (AFP) — A Lebanese civil Sunday as mortar fire from the Israeli army (SLA) hit a village in the western sector of the zone. The civilian, 76, was wounded in the outskirts of the village of Al-Majdal Zoun and Mansuri after some 40 mortar rounds in the direction of the village. According to the anti-Israeli fighters, according to the spokesman said no one was killed or injured. The spokesman of the SLA position, T. Amal, headed by Lebanese spokesman Nabih Berri, later claimed an attack against the SLA.

Volume 23 Number 6912

Wa

By Ahmad Khatib
Special to the Jordan Times

Minister of Water and Irrigation Haddadin on Sunday submitted his resignation to the government until his resignation is accepted.

"I had the honour to serve my country within your government as Minister of Water and Irrigation. But I have faced circumstances while carrying out my duties which have made it impossible for me to continue in the post," Haddadin said in his letter to King Abdullah II.

"I do not want these circumstances to affect the achievements of the government and the Jordan Valley Water Authority."

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